

The pride of North Carolina's electric cooperatives

Volume 46, No. 12 December 2014

# Carolina country

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C293

PERIODICAL

Your Touchstone Energy Cooperative

## Merry & Bright

INSIDE:

Run, run rescue

Oyster roasts

Warm floors

Your Piedmont EMC holiday savings guide is inside—see center pages





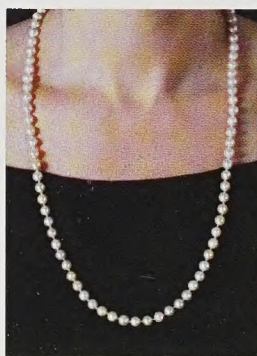
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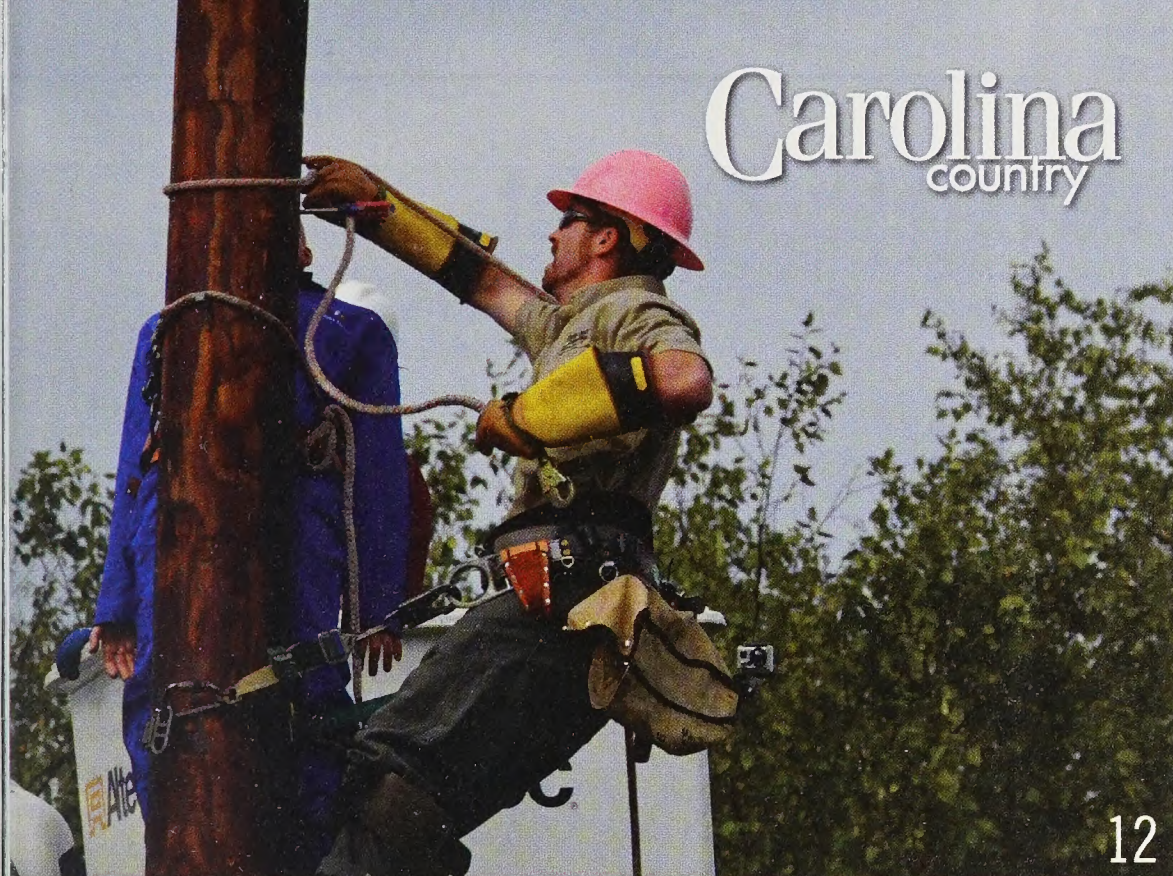
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### ON THE COVER

An old building's door on New Town Road in Union County between Weddington and Waxhaw. Julie Davidson, a member of Union Power Cooperative, sent it to us. "I just love it because the building is falling apart but someone still cares about it."





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North Carolina's electric cooperatives provide reliable, safe and affordable electric service to nearly 900,000 homes and businesses. The 26 electric cooperatives are each member-owned, not-for-profit and overseen by a board of directors elected by the membership.

## Why Do We Send You Carolina Country Magazine?

Your cooperative sends you Carolina Country as a convenient, economical way to share with its members information about services, director elections, meetings and management decisions. The magazine also carries legal notices that otherwise would be published in other media at greater cost.

Your co-op's board of directors authorizes a subscription to Carolina Country on behalf of the membership at a cost of less than \$5 per year.

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## HAS YOUR ADDRESS CHANGED?

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Soy ink is naturally low in VOCs (volatile organic compounds) and its usage can reduce emissions causing air pollution.

# Earning respect

by Samuel C. Newsome, M.D.



I was the child of a farmer. Actually my family was like many in rural North Carolina. We relied on income from my father's factory job plus our farm income to make ends meet. Dad would work evenings in the factory and farm during the day. We all did our chores and assumed everyone lived that way.

Saturday mornings we made trips to town for weekly errands. On a monthly basis those trips included a visit to Sercey's Barbershop. Sitting in a barbershop was about the most boring way a 6-year-old could spend

a Saturday. The shop was little more than a storefront with two chairs, a row of seats and a small black-and-white TV tuned to sports. In those days there was always a swirl of cigarette smoke rising from several ashtrays. A visit to the barbershop could take all morning. Dad would discuss crops, weather and occasionally politics with the regulars. Years later, I realized that the long waits for a trim were rare opportunities for Dad to get the local news and maintain a connection to his peers. For me it was just time spent in a stuffy smoke-filled barbershop and away from cartoons.

On one such trip in 1955, as the long wait for our turn had almost arrived, a tall, lanky man sauntered into the shop. Sercey brushed out the seat and waved the linen with a snap and said, "Come on in, Doc. You havin' a busy day are ya? You fellas don't mind if I give Doc Jones a trim. He's got an office full of

sick'ns across the street."

I sure did mind, but I guess I was the only one. From the line of chairs with a dozen men rose a chorus of, "Sure, go ahead Doc." I had yet to learn that the local barbershop and the occasional haircut were social phenomena that

were more complex than grooming. The haircut was about comradeship, part of the fabric of small town life.

As mystified as I was regarding the intricacies of barbershop etiquette, I was sure of one thing: Doc was important. He was respected by a whole shop

full of farmers waiting with large calloused hands. These were hard-working, good Christian men. They were men who knew the weather and the land. Yes, for someone to earn their respect was a very big deal!

I didn't know anything about medicine, and I wasn't sure what a doctor did except give shots, but I knew on that Saturday morning it was my calling. I must admit that I wavered several times since that morning in 1955, but I managed to stay the course and eventually become a family physician. I've practiced in my hometown for 36 years. For some of that time, Dr. Jones and I were colleagues.

I'm glad that before his death, I was able to share this story with Joseph Reid Jones Jr., "Dr. Bill."

Dr. Newsome lives in King, Stokes County, and is a member of Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative.



My sister and me on Christmas 1953.



### No deer here

We live in a gated community on Lake Tillery, directly in front of Uwharrie National Forest. Deer hunters are not allowed to kill deer in our community. The intelligent deer just cross the road to vegetation and safety. This is why most residents do not attempt to have a flower or vegetable garden.

My garden shows that you can have flowers in a deer-infested area. Sheffield mums, Mexican sunflowers, Four O'Clocks, Miss Huff Lantana, Mexican sage from George's Plant farm, iris, yellow jasmine, clematis and 25 others.

*Gerald Yates, Mt. Gilead, Randolph EMC*

**Editor's note:** To see more pictures and the complete list of Mr. Yates' flowers, go to our website [carolinacountry.com](http://carolinacountry.com).



### Ant architects

Imagine my surprise when I came upon this large ant hill out in my backyard one day. It looked like a tiny city. What great architects they are.

*Lona Mae Bullis, Boomer, EnergyUnited*



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### Nosey tree frog

Every winter I cover our two outdoor water fountains to avoid damage from frozen water. In the spring, I uncovered one fountain and there was a resting tree frog. He patiently stayed put while I ran in the house to pick up my camera.

*David Harper, Shallotte, Brunswick EMC*







# Where Dreams Took Hold

by Larry H. Prescott


**T**here's a story behind this picture of a cabin in Pamlico County on a snow-covered morning in 2005. My cousin's dad purchased the land, known as the Dixon Place. As you can see in the foreground, there is a pond here. This is called the "little pond." As I stand taking the picture, behind me is the "big pond." This was our swimming hole in the late 1940s and during high school days in the 1950s. My twin brother, our first cousin and I spent many hours in the pond swimming, diving, fishing, duck hunting. Growing up, we learned to farm here, drove tractors, hunted, rode horses, played "Cowboys and Indians." Yes, we rode horses and ponies bareback through the woods and down paths made by cows and deer. You can imagine what fun that was.

My cousin and his wife, after retiring, had a dream. They wanted to build

a little cabin on this site near the pond where they could enjoy their remaining years together with their family and friends. Here is the kicker: They built this cabin with their bare hands. They cut logs on the property, pulled them up to the site, sawed them into rafters, studs, floor support and flooring. They did the work themselves, even though we offered to help. They would say, "We want this to be our dream cabin, and we will do it all." And they did.

So many others have enjoyed their cabin as well. Their children and grandchildren slept many cold nights near the woodstove on the first floor and in the loft above. Many activities occur here at Thanksgiving and Christmas. A family reunion was held here.

My cousin and his wife tell us the most peaceful times are when they just go to the cabin on a cool clear day, stoke the stove, sit in the rocker and reminisce

about the good old days. When I took this picture early that snow-covered morning, I was tempted to go inside, fire up the woodstove, sit in the rocker and recall our childhood. 

*Larry H. Prescott lives in New Bern, where he is a member of Tideland EMC.*

## Send Your Story

If you have a story for "Where Life Takes Us," about an inspiring person who is helping others today, or about your own journey, send it to us with pictures.

- We will pay \$100 for those we can publish.
- Send about 400 words.
- Pictures must be high resolution or good quality prints.
- We retain reprint rights.
- Include a stamped, self-addressed envelope if you want anything returned.
- Tell us your name, mailing address, and the name of your electric cooperative.
- To submit: email to [editor@carolinacountry.com](mailto:editor@carolinacountry.com) ("Inspiration" in the subject line) or online at [carolinacountry.com/contact](http://carolinacountry.com/contact)



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*Dwayne and Kim Dean (at left) and their daughter Kennedy at the Oct. 4 East Carolina football game with Tri-County EMC general manager Mike Davis. ECU's athletic director Jeff Compher is on the right.*

## Another win for the Ronald McDonald House

North Carolina's electric cooperatives in October placed the Ronald McDonald House of Eastern North Carolina in the spotlight at an East Carolina University football game in Greenville. J. Michael Davis, general manager of Tri-County Electric in Dudley and board president of the Ronald McDonald House, represented the cooperatives in a halftime interview. The Pirates went on to wallop American Athletic Conference rival Southern Methodist 45–24.

Electric co-ops have long supported the Ronald McDonald House that provides a home away from home for families of children receiving treatment at Greenville-area medical facilities.

In an on-field presentation, Davis also gave a game ball to Dwayne and Kim Dean and their daughter Kennedy. The Deans, who live in Pikeville, Wayne County, and are members of Tri-County EMC, stayed at the House for three months while Kennedy received treatment for a brain hemorrhage. The Deans also received VIP tickets to the game.

A video on how the House helped another North Carolina family stay near their daughter while she was in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit ran on the video board during the game. See the video at [carolinacountry.com](http://carolinacountry.com).

## A \$6 million loan will help members make energy efficiency improvements

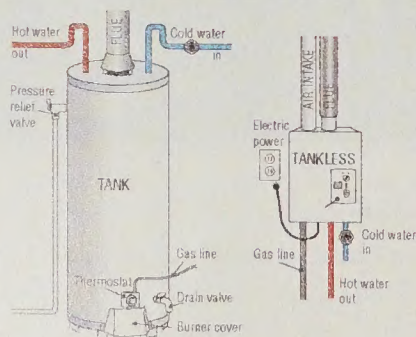
Roanoke Electric Cooperative has launched its Upgrade to Save program that will help members pay for energy efficiency improvements at their homes and businesses. The Rural Utilities Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture awarded the cooperative a \$6 million loan to operate the program.

Upgrade to Save will allow efficiency improvements at existing buildings at no upfront cost to the member. Participants agree to pay a tariff on their bill that shares the energy savings with the cooperative at a level that ensures immediate savings for the member and full cost recovery for the co-op.

Curtis Wynn, CEO of Roanoke Electric, said the funding will provide new opportunities to members who may not otherwise be able to take on a loan for making such improvements. "With this financing, we will be able to make investments that cut waste, reduce costs, support our local economy and improve the quality and comfort of the homes and businesses we serve," Wynn said.

Roanoke Electric Cooperative serves more than 14,000 member accounts in Hertford, Bertie, Northampton, Gates and parts of Halifax, Chowan and Perquimans counties. The region includes economically challenged households and businesses, many with high energy burdens.

Congressman G. K. Butterfield in October presented the \$6 million check to the cooperative. The funds represent a USDA Electric Guaranteed Loan. These loans are used to acquire, construct, extend, upgrade, and otherwise improve energy generation, transmission or distribution facilities serving communities in which the average residential energy expenditure for home energy is at least 275 percent of the national average.



*See illustrated home improvement projects from [togetherwesave.com](http://togetherwesave.com).*

## What home improvement projects can you do?

The "Home Efficiency Analysis Tool" offered by Touchstone Energy is an easy and interactive exercise to learn what improvements you can make at home to increase its energy efficiency and lower your electric costs.

On the website [togetherwesave.com](http://togetherwesave.com), sponsored by Touchstone Energy Cooperatives, you can create a "profile" of your house: where it is, what type it is, some construction features, its size, when it was built and how many occupants are there. Then given that information, you can look at a series of guides that point to actual projects that could make your place more energy efficient. The projects, from Southface Energy Institute, are well explained and illustrated.



# How to get electrocuted or land in jail

## Pay attention

Your electric cooperative urges you to follow these guidelines to guard against electrical dangers and prevent copper theft.

- Never enter or touch equipment inside a substation; stay away from power lines and anything touching a power line.
- If you notice anything unusual with electric facilities, such as an open substation gate, open equipment or hanging wire, contact your electric co-op immediately.
- If you see anyone around electric substations or electric facilities other than co-op personnel or contractors, call the police.

**T**hieves working in Craven and Jones counties in October risked death by electrocution when they stole copper grounding wire from two electricity substations owned by Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative. A theft near Havelock caused a power outage for 1,900 co-op members. At a Maysville substation, thieves cut through chainlink fence and took ground wire off 27 structures. Both the outage and damage repair are very costly to cooperative members.

"We are thankful no one was injured or killed," said CCEC communications director Lisa Galizia. "Thefts from our substations will not only knock out power to our members, they can also cause fires, explosions and electrocution."

Copper is used to ground electrical equipment, protecting it from electrical surges and lightning by giving electricity a safe path to the ground. Without proper grounding, anyone who comes into contact with the electric system could suffer electric shock strong enough to cause death. This includes cooperative employees, law-abiding citizens and even children.

## Thieves take huge risks


State government in 2012 strengthened state law to make it more difficult for thieves to sell copper and for buyers to accept stolen copper. The expanded legislation makes stealing copper a criminal offense. It prohibits recyclers from making cash payments for copper to any seller. Also, recyclers must have a permit to be in business, and if a recycler does not comply with the law, the permit or license can be revoked. Recyclers are required to take a video or digital photo of the seller together with the metal he or she is selling. Recyclers must also keep a copy of the seller's ID. Records must be kept at least two years, and made available to law enforcement upon request.

Furthermore, it is against the law for anyone to have more than 25 pounds of copper in a vehicle unless it's for work purposes, and metal sellers must present a valid ID at the time of sale. Co-ops routinely notify law enforcement when they have good reason to suspect copper theft.

"To a would-be thief, stealing copper may seem like a quick way to make a buck," says Tommy Greer, director of job training and safety

for the North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives. "But it's illegal, it's costly, and it's not worth a life. Working with any metal and electricity is a dangerous combination, even for trained employees using proper equipment."

Thieves may not understand that they are risking their lives by taking copper from substations, where high transmission voltage is stepped down to a lower current for distribution lines. All power lines carry a potentially deadly charge.

In Hoke County in 2010, a 23-year-old was electrocuted to death after he and a friend broke into a power substation and began stripping copper off the equipment, reported Walter White of Lumbee River EMC, the co-op that serves that area. 

## In the News

Watch a video from WITN about the recent thefts on [carolinacountry.com](http://carolinacountry.com).



# Try This!

## 'Tis the season for family, fellowship and lots of cooking

By Katie Kothmann Haby, CCC

No matter what or how you celebrate, energy use tends to increase over the holiday season. With more guests in your home and activities taking place, your electric meter spins a little faster than usual, costing you more money. Start the New Year off right. Celebrate the holidays efficiently so you don't have to worry about a high electric bill.

### Decorating

If you choose to decorate with strings of lights, consider LED (light emitting diode) options. They use over 80 percent less energy than traditional strings of lights and have a longer life. Make sure to purchase high quality strings from reputable sources. Safety and the lifetime can be compromised in less expensive LED strands.

Solar powered lighting options are also worth considering for decorations: no electric cord needed, as long as you have a proper location for the solar panel that powers them.



### Holiday decorating tip:

Consider decorating your home with strands of LED (light emitting diode) lights. LEDs use over 80 percent less energy than traditional holiday light strands and last longer!

Place strands of electric lights on timers so they automatically turn on in the evening and off around bed time. You won't have to spend time thinking about plugging and unplugging them, and you won't have to spend money powering them when unnecessary.

Decorate with less lighting than usual. For a natural, vintage feel, use items like pinecones, greenery, candy canes, popcorn strings and gingerbread. The whole family can get involved decorating the home with these safe and festive items.

### Cooking

Cook with your microwave, toaster oven or slow cooker whenever possible. Small appliances cook quickly and more efficiently than your oven.


When you do use the oven, cook more than one item at a time. Have a ham, sweet potato casserole and rolls that all need to cook in the oven? Make some adjustments to cooking temperatures and times, and put all your dishes in at once to take full advantage of the heat that's being produced.

Don't peek! It's tempting to open the oven door to check on holiday treats. Use the oven light instead, and keep the door closed. This will keep the heat where it belongs: inside the oven.

Glass and ceramic dishes allow you to cook food at a lower temperature than metal baking dishes. If the recipe calls for a metal baking pan and you substitute glass or ceramic cookware, reduce the temperature by about 25 degrees F.

Defrost food before you cook. Planning ahead can cut cooking times and energy use in half. Place any frozen dishes in the refrigerator the night before so they are ready to go in the oven the next morning.

### Around the house

Turn down your thermostat a few degrees. Extra people bustling around the home and the oven warming food will heat up your house a few extra degrees. Take advantage and adjust your thermostat accordingly. You will save some money on your bill, and your guests will still be comfortable. 

Katie Kothmann Haby writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

For more information on how to save energy, including a virtual house tour, go to [TOGETHERWESAVE.COM](http://TOGETHERWESAVE.COM)



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# running a pole top rescue in **LESS THAN 3 MINUTES**

**C**hris Griffin and Brad Payne, linemen from Union Power Cooperative in Monroe and French Broad EMC in Marshall, respectively, were crowned Pole Top Rescue Champions in October. They outperformed 22 other local champions Oct. 16 at the state competition held at the Raleigh headquarters of North Carolina's electric cooperatives. More than 600 of North Carolina's electric cooperative line workers began the year competing for the 2014 title.

The championship, held every two years, demonstrates the skill and agility of co-op linemen in recognizing a victim in trouble on a power pole, reporting the incident, scaling the pole, safely lowering the victim and beginning a first aid process. Competitors with the fastest times win.

This year's competition had two categories based on the type of protection competitors used to prevent themselves from falling. One group used a newer form of personal fall protection gear that wraps around the pole during the ascent and descent; the other group secured themselves in the more traditional way with a lifeline rope and

life hook. Griffin won the category with the personal fall protection gear, and Payne won first prize in the lifeline protection category. In 2015, new federal safety rules will eliminate the use of the lifeline gear on poles.

Chris Griffin's time of 1:33.47 set a new state record for performing the rescue using personal fall protection. He finished third in 2012, running in 1:57.62.

Griffin's time broke by about three-tenths of a second the record set in 2012 by three-time champion Leonard Person of Tri-County EMC whose time of 1:35.48 this year gave him a second-place finish in the personal fall protection category. Placing third was Kenny Simmons of Pee Dee EMC with a time of 1:37.97. He placed first in the lifeline category in 2012 with a time of 1:36.74.

Brad Payne's time of 1:49.50 was about 26 seconds faster than the runner-up in the lifeline category. Placing second was Chad Bryant of Halifax EMC with a time of 2:15.86, and third was Jonathan Long of Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative with a time of 2:20.74. Long's 2012 time in the same event was 2:08.31.


## **Linemen are well trained**

In the Pole Top Rescue scenario, linemen place an emergency radio call, don climbing gear, climb 20 feet up a utility pole, rig a rope, lower a 105-pound mannequin and begin lifesaving procedures. Judges time the runs and watch every move, adding to a competitor's time for any lapses in safety procedures.

Performing a rescue is one of many

skills linemen learn in a rigorous training program that emphasizes diligence and safety. Cooperative linemen work in a wide variety of jobs, including building, maintaining and repairing electric lines, poles and other equipment, such as transformers, regulators, insulators, meters and substation facilities. They also work to restore power after outages, and in times of major damage they can be sent to other regions where they help co-op crews rebuild their systems.

Judging the Pole Top Rescue competition were staff members and associates of the Job Training & Safety program maintained by the North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives (NCAEC). Many of the linemen at this year's event, including those attending as alternates for their co-op's lead competitor, have studied in the Electric Line Construction Technology program coordinated by NCAEC in conjunction with Nash Community College. Nash CC president William S. Carver II attended the event.

Master of ceremonies for the competition was Dale F. Lambert, CEO of Randolph EMC in Asheboro, where he worked as a lineman for nine years before taking on management responsibilities. 

—Michael E.C. Ger



*Union Power Cooperative's Chris Griffin (above) and French Broad EMC's Brad Payne (at right) are the 2014 Pole Top Rescue champions. (Photos by Randy Berger)*



# 2014 Pole Top Rescue Competition Scoreboard

(in alphabetical order by co-op)

NAME OF CONTESTANT	ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE	TIME (Minutes:seconds)
Matthew Byrum	Albemarle EMC, Hertford	1:57.17
Chad Rupard	Blue Ridge EMC, Lenoir	2:41.86
Justin Ward	Brunswick EMC, Shallotte	2:11.40
Richard Augustson	Cape Hatteras Electric Buxton	2:45.33*
Jonathan Long	Carteret-Craven Electric, Newport	2:20.74*
Harris Morrison	Central EMC, Sanford	3:02.31
Blake Fleming	Edgecombe-Martin County EMC, Tarboro	2:15.84
Austin Story	EnergyUnited, Statesville	1:50.44
Lee Bain	Four County EMC, Burgaw	2:59.75*
Brad Payne	French Broad EMC, Marshall	1:49.50*
Chad Bryant	Halifax EMC, Enfield	2:15.86*
Joshua Munro	Lumbee River EMC, Red Springs	1:57.13
Kenny Simmons	Pee Dee EMC, Wadesboro	1:37.97
Jonathan Jacobs	Piedmont EMC, Hillsborough	2:56.33
Brantley Lawrence	Pitt & Greene EMC, Farmville	1:41.72
Danny Lee	Randolph EMC, Asheboro	2:12.09
Charles Bryant	Roanoke Electric, Ahoskie	2:29.53
Kyle Davis	Rutherford EMC, Forest City	1:47.68
Carson Walker	South River EMC, Dunn	3:22.52
Justin Collins	Surry-Yadkin EMC, Dobson	2:19.96
Matthew Neal	Tideland EMC, Pantego	3:05.82
Leonard Person	Tri-County EMC, Dudley	1:35.48
Chris Griffin	Union Power, Monroe	1:33.47
Cory Lawrence	Wake Electric, Wake Forest	2:10.81

\* Denotes competitor using lifeline fall protection.



See more pictures and video on our website: [carolinacountry.com](http://carolinacountry.com)

The top three finishers in the personal fall protection group were (left photo) Chris Griffin, Leonard Person and Kenny Simmons. The top three using the lifeline fall protection were (right photo) Brad Payne, Chad Bryant and Jonathan Long.



Charles Bryant (left) ran a time of 2:29.53. His son Chad finished in 2:15.86 and placed third. Pole Top Rescue emcee Dale Lambert gave the older lineman a "handicap," however, and called the runs about even.

## Line work as a family affair

Spectators and fellow linemen at the Oct. 16 statewide Pole Top Rescue Competition witnessed, for the first time ever, a father and son compete in the event. Chad Bryant, a Lineman II for Halifax EMC based in Enfield, went head-to-head with this father, Charles Bryant, Serviceman for Roanoke Electric Cooperative based in Ahoskie.

A 23-year veteran of line work, Charles Bryant had quite an influence on Chad's career choice. For as long as he can remember, Chad wanted to follow in his father's footsteps. He did follow in his father's footsteps, but Chad also touts his love for the outdoors and affinity for climbing high as reasons he became a lineman.

It seems Chad's father not only influenced his career but also his choice to work for a cooperative. Growing up, Chad witnessed firsthand the family-oriented working atmosphere of the cooperative. He likes the fact that Halifax EMC, like most cooperatives, is a smaller organization where he is not just a number.

Charles and his wife, Heather, live in Roanoke Rapids with daughter Kristin. Chad, a graduate of the Nash Community College Electric Line Construction Technology program, has worked with Halifax EMC since June 2013 and previously was a lineman with Edgecombe-Martin County EMC, Tarboro.

When asked about the most valuable piece of advice he has shared with Chad concerning line work, Charles replied, "Be safe." It's something he tells his son on a daily basis.

—Julia Allsbrook  
Halifax EMC Communication Specialist



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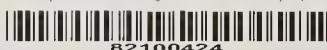
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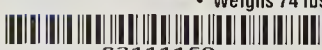
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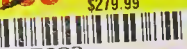
US GENERAL

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SAVE  
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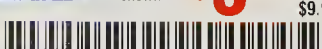
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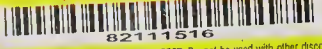
LOT NO. 69684/61776/61969/61970



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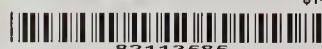
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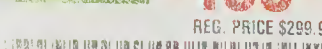
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REG. PRICE \$19.99

82131753

LIMIT 6 - Good at our stores or HarborFreight.com or by calling 800-423-2567. Cannot be used with other discount or coupon or prior purchases after 30 days from original purchase with original receipt. Offer good while supplies last. Non-transferable. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 3/21/15. Limit one coupon per customer per day.

**SUPER COUPON!**

**CAN AND OBD II PROFESSIONAL SCAN TOOL**

**CENTECH**

LOT NO. 98614 60694/62120

Item 60694 shown

**SAVE \$50**

**\$9999** ~~\$149.99~~

REG. PRICE \$149.99

82139564

LIMIT 4 - Good at our stores or HarborFreight.com or by calling 800-423-2567. Cannot be used with other discount or coupon or prior purchases after 30 days from original purchase with original receipt. Offer good while supplies last. Non-transferable. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 3/21/15. Limit one coupon per customer per day.

**SUPER COUPON!**

**WIRELESS SECURITY ALERT SYSTEM**

**Bunker Hill Security**

Item 93068 shown

LOT NO. 93068/62447 69590/61910

**SAVE 53%**

**\$1399** ~~\$29.99~~

REG. PRICE \$29.99

82128094

LIMIT 5 - Good at our stores or HarborFreight.com or by calling 800-423-2567. Cannot be used with other discount or coupon or prior purchases after 30 days from original purchase with original receipt. Offer good while supplies last. Non-transferable. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 3/21/15. Limit one coupon per customer per day.

• 100% Satisfaction Guaranteed • No Hassle Return Policy • 500+ Stores Nationwide • HarborFreight.com 800-423-2567

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# Oyster Roasts

## *An eastern North Carolina tradition*

by Donna Campbell Smith

**T**he oyster roast was the quintessential feed-a-crowd party when we were growing up in the 1950s and 1960s. Some of my earliest memories of family gatherings are of oyster roasts in my grandfather's backyard. Papa Tom built a backyard grill for oyster roasts and fish fries. It was constructed of concrete blocks. It had a chimney and a compartment on the side for storing wood. The cooking surface was large enough to hold two large steel pans. In those pans the oysters were covered with wet burlap bags for creating the steam that cooked them. The fuel for the fire was hardwood handle scraps from the True Temper handle mill in Plymouth. Papa Tom got the scraps delivered by the dump truck load.

When the oysters were "done," the men dumped them onto a long table and the feasting began. The only "sides" served with oysters were saltine crackers, melted butter and cocktail sauce. The only beverage I remember was Coca-Cola. My uncle worked at the Coca-Cola bottling plant in Plymouth so there was always a crate of Cokes at Papa Tom's house. The grownups had their own oyster knives and knew the art of shucking oysters. I wasn't allowed to handle the shucking knife, so Daddy usually shared what he shucked with me. There was no dessert. We believed eating sweets after oysters would make us sick. We also did not eat oysters in a month without an "r" in its name.

### Scalloped oysters for Christmas

After my grandfather died we no longer gathered around the outdoor grill in his back yard. We still ate oysters, though. Every Thanksgiving and Christmas, Mama made a casserole she called scalloped oysters. It is a simple dish made of crackers, butter and oysters. Mama crushed the crackers and tossed them in melted butter. Next, she layered crackers and oysters in her Corningware casserole dish until she finished with a cracker layer on top. In the final step she poured the oyster juice over the crackers and oysters, adding enough milk to the juice for a full cup if needed. She baked it at 350 degrees for about 30 minutes or until the top was golden

brown. I make no guarantees on this recipe. Now that Mama has passed away we all argue on whether or not she added Worcestershire sauce. I am sure she did not, but my daughters think she did.

Mama fried oysters on special occasions, too. She breaded them in flour, seasoned with salt and pepper and then let them "sit" in the refrigerator for a few hours. This sitting method was Mama's secret to crispy fried food whether it be

oysters, chicken or green tomatoes. The funny thing is Mama did not like oysters, but she could cook them to perfection.

There is a little bonus to be found inside some oysters: tiny crabs that take refuge inside the shells. Once the oysters are cooked and you open the shell, you find these little critters cooked to a pretty pink color. They taste somewhat like shrimp.

Once my children were grown we started having our Christmas gathering on "Old Christmas" or the Saturday nearest January 6. We do our gift exchange and we have an oyster roast in my backyard. Now there are grandchildren and great-grandchildren so we have a nice little crowd. We like our cocktail sauce spicy, so

we make our own concoction with enough horseradish to clear our sinuses, a little Texas Pete, lemon juice and catsup. There is also a bowl of melted butter on the side and plenty of soda crackers. We gather around the fire pit, which in true redneck style is made from a repurposed washing machine barrel, with the burlap-covered oysters steaming in a bucket on a rack across the top of the fire pit. The wood fire keeps us warm in the January air. We laugh and tell stories on each other, all the while shucking and eating oysters. We all declare that North Carolina oysters from Rose Bay are the best in the whole wide world, and every year is better than the last. 🍽️

*Donna Campbell Smith is a Carolina Country contributing writer who lives in Franklin County.*

Find safety tips for storing and preparing oysters at [nccatch.org](http://nccatch.org).

Find oyster recipes from N.C. Department of Agriculture at [ncagr.gov](http://ncagr.gov).

*Papa Tom fired this grill with hardwood scraps from the handle mill in Plymouth.*





**WHERE IN  
CAROLINA COUNTRY  
IS THIS?**

This is a Carolina Country scene in Touchstone Energy territory. If you know where it is, send your answer by Dec. 5 with your name, address and the name of your electric cooperative.

Online: [carolinacountry.com](http://carolinacountry.com)

By e-mail: [where@carolinacountry.com](mailto:where@carolinacountry.com)

Or by mail: Where in Carolina Country?  
P.O. Box 27306  
Raleigh, NC 27611

Multiple entries from the same person will be disqualified.

The winner, chosen at random and announced in our January issue, will receive \$25. To see the answer before you get your January magazine, go to "Where Is This?" on our website [carolinacountry.com](http://carolinacountry.com).



### November winner

The November picture came from Dwight Ellison of West End. It shows an elephant figure at the Sanders home place off Hwy. 109 in the Uwharrie community of Montgomery County, between Denton and Troy. Geraldine Craven told us the elephant came from the Tote Em In Zoo (now Tregembo Animal Park) on Carolina Beach Rd. near Wilmington. More than 180 of you submitted the correct answer, and the winning entry, chosen at random from all correct submissions, was from Kathryn Williams of Mt. Gilead, a member of Randolph EMC.



November

# We Build On Your Land



**\$184,490**



## The Worthington

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- Stick-Built Construction
- 50+ Home Designs
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- Immediate Price Quotes

Visit One Of Our Model Homes: Charlotte: (704) 916-9568

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Design and price your dream home online at

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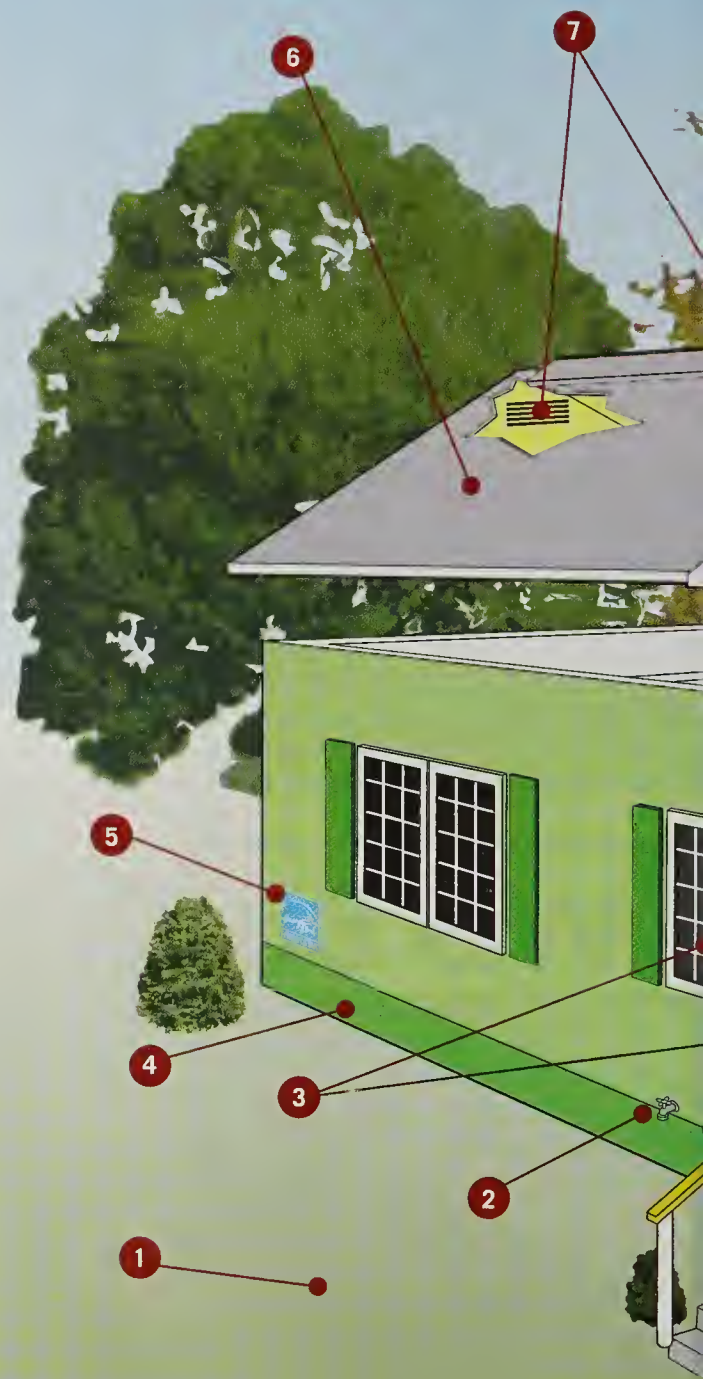
\*All information is deemed reliable but is not guaranteed and is subject to change without notice.



# Tried & True

22 tips for buying and maintaining an energy-efficient manufactured home

- 1 Make sure your dealer grades the site properly. Poor grading leads to settling and moisture problems.
- 2 Seal all plumbing and wiring penetrations. Use expanding foam for large penetrations, caulk for small penetrations.
- 3 Install storm windows and doors. Weather strip leaky ones.
- 4 Install vinyl or metal skirting or a foundation wall to protect the home's underbelly and duct connections.
- 5 An Energy Star-qualified home guarantees effective insulation, high-performance windows, tight construction and efficient heating and cooling equipment.
- 6 Choose the lightest color roof shingles possible to keep the attic from getting too hot.
- 7 Gable end and ridge vents provide ample ventilation. You shouldn't need an attic fan.
- 8 Strategically plant trees to reduce sun exposure during summer and act as a windbreak during winter.
- 9 Make sure attic insulation has not shifted during transit before joining multi-section homes.
- 10 Ceiling fans should be turned off in unoccupied rooms.
- 11 Choose Energy Star products including appliances, HVAC and lighting.
- 12 Make sure the "marriage walls" (where two sections join) are airtight with foam gaskets installed between sections.
- 13 Have HVAC system properly sized. Oversized systems contribute to high bills and high indoor humidity. Request a factory-installed heat pump instead of an electric furnace.
- 14 Have an experienced technician tune up your HVAC system annually to maintain maximum efficiency.
- 15 Set water heater thermostat to 120 degrees.
- 16 Keep all interior doors and air registers open for energy-efficient airflow.
- 17 Change return air filters monthly. Avoid pleated filters because they can restrict proper air flow.
- 18 On multi-section homes, make sure all ducts that cross over to another section are properly joined with a mastic sealer.
- 19 Set HVAC thermostat to about 78 degrees in summer, 68 degrees in winter.
- 20 Make sure the clothes dryer is vented to the outdoors and away from outdoor heating and air conditioning components.
- 21 Invest in an insulation package that maximizes energy savings. Consider more than the minimum requirement.
- 22 Install a continuous vapor barrier underneath the home. Heated floors work well.





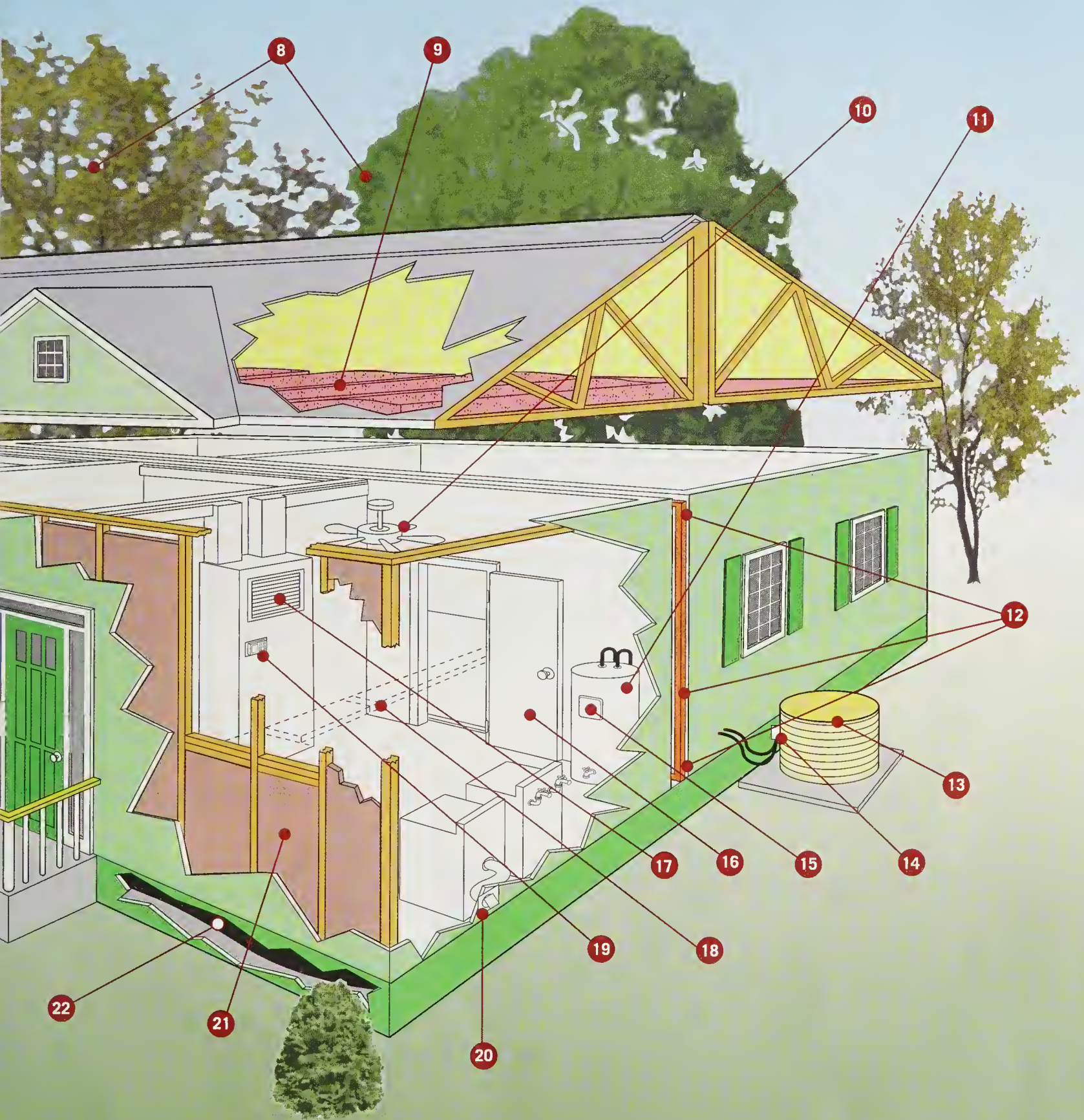


Illustration by Ed Vernon,  
for North Carolina's Touchstone Energy cooperatives





## EVERY MEMBER HAS A VOICE. EVEN THE ONES WHO CAN'T YET SPEAK.

As an electric co-op member, your household has a say in how the co-op is run. Which helps you care for an even bigger family – your community. Learn more about the power of your co-op membership at [TogetherWeSave.com](http://TogetherWeSave.com).

North Carolina's  
Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives

**TOGETHERWESAVE.COM**





# Making your home smarter

*New apps let you control your home's systems from just about anywhere*

With apps that offer comfort, convenience and security, you can get more out of your smartphones, tablets and laptops to make your home a better place to live. Smart home apps link various home devices together to bring peace of mind, control and even energy savings to our lives.

**T**he best part is the app functions can be performed away from home, so you can monitor your most valuable investment—even while out of town. Here is a guide to technologies that exist to make homes smarter:

## Adjusting temperatures

Imagine coming home from a trip to learn your town is experiencing extreme weather conditions. There's no need to worry about how hot or cold your home will be. Apps allow you to control the temperature settings on the thermostat from your smartphone, tablet or laptop, so your home's temperature will be just the way you like it when you arrive. These capabilities are also eco-friendly, allowing users to regulate the temperature while the home is unoccupied, which can mean savings on energy bills.

## Let a little sunlight in

Until recently, motorized window shades were an expensive luxury—that is, until smartphone technology came into play. Now you can adjust your curtains and the natural light streaming into your rooms with one of several apps. These systems also allow you to set a schedule for opening your shades, so you can wake up to natural light every morning.

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Now you can adjust your curtains and the natural light streaming into your rooms with one of several apps.

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Gaity Images

## Recording TV programs


Have you ever misplaced your television's remote control? Do you have a hard time remembering to record your favorite television programs before leaving the house? Both of these problems can be solved with your mobile device. By downloading an app to connect to your smart TV, you can turn your phone or tablet into a remote control that allows you to schedule your favorite show and film recordings from anywhere.

## Monitor your garage from anywhere

Sometimes it's hard to remember if you closed the garage door. Designed to work with a free smartphone app, MyQ Garage by Chamberlain works with most garage door openers installed after

1993, and uses your home's Wi-Fi to allow you to open your garage door remotely. The app also sends automatic notifications to your mobile device when the door opens or closes, so you know when someone else is operating the door. For more information, visit [chamberlain.com](http://chamberlain.com).

## Flip the switch

When traveling, many people leave lights on inside their homes to deter thieves. Some smart apps allow you to control various lighting sources within your home through your smartphone or tablet. Do you have a forgetful family member who always leaves on the lights? Save energy and money with the ability to turn off those lights from anywhere. 

—Family Features.com



# Your year-end financial checklist

*Actions include using health benefits and rebalancing your portfolio to reflect your goals*

By Allison Goldberg

The holidays can be a hectic time. It's easy to put aside your financial health during busy times, but here's a quick financial checklist to consider before the end of the year.

Contribute more to your 401(k). The maximum salary deferral limit for 401(k) plans in 2014 is \$17,500, while those who are age 50 and older may contribute up to \$23,000 per year. If you make contributions on a pre-tax basis, you may be able to increase your contributions and lower your current year tax liability. Contributions must be made

by payroll deduction by December 31, so speak to your employer's human resources or payroll department to find out how to increase your deferrals.


Take your required minimum distribution (RMD), if you haven't already. If you turned 70.5 years old before 2014, you must take the RMD from your 401(k) by December 31 unless you're still working for that employer. If you don't take your RMD, the penalty is a federal tax of 50 percent on the amount you should've taken. Contact your tax advisor for additional information.

Reallocate your investments to reflect your current goals. Reassess your time horizon, goals and risk tolerance, then adjust your portfolio accordingly.


Review your beneficiary information. Has there been a birth of a child or grandchild? A marriage or divorce? Confirm that your will names the appropriate beneficiary or beneficiaries and that the allocations meet your wishes. This also applies to each insurance policy, each retirement account and anything that transfers by beneficiary designation.

Get your annual physical and take care of other health necessities. Your health benefits likely reset on January 1. Make the most of both your benefits and your flexible spending account (FSA), if you have one, by scheduling and going to appointments you might be delaying, like your annual physical and eye exams, your bi-annual dental exam and any specialist appointments you need.

Review your progress on the financial goals you set at the beginning of the year. Did you reach the goals and adhere to the guidelines? Are they worth repeating next year? Do they require adjustment? Knowing where you stand will help you create a financial plan for 2015.

After assessing your progress toward your 2014 goals, set financial goals for 2015 and prepare your 2015 budget. If you kept a budget in 2014 or have credit or debit card accounts that track how you spend your money, use these tools to evaluate how and when you spend. If you've not made a budget before, there are many online tools to help you, such as [budgetsimple.com](http://budgetsimple.com). You'll need basic information, like your net income and recurring expenses, to get started. You might be surprised at the financial discipline you find when you see your income and expenses in black and white. 

Allison Goldberg writes and edits materials for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.



After assessing your progress toward your 2014 goals, set financial goals for 2015 and prepare your 2015 budget.





FEATURE ARTICLE

## PIEDMONT ELECTRIC LOANS FUNDS FOR ORANGE RURAL FIRE TRUCK

Piedmont Electric continues our success in our Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant (REDLG) program with a \$360,000 zero-interest loan to the Orange Rural Fire Department in Hillsborough, NC. The funds are available as part of a partnership with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), which provides zero-interest loans and grants to local electric cooperatives. The money is then loaned to local businesses for projects that support local areas.

The new fire truck will serve as a first response unit for all fire, rescue and wreck calls that occur within the Orange Rural Fire district, and the savings on interest alone will allow for

the creation of three new positions in fire protection in the field. Once repaid, the funds loaned by Piedmont EMC will be added to a revolving loan fund, which will be re-loaned to assist with future projects in our service area.

Piedmont Electric is especially proud to announce that our REDLG program awarded three loans from October 1, 2013, to September 30, 2014. This was the highest number of grants awarded in the nation by the USDA for the fiscal year of 2014. These loans have contributed to the safety and economic stability of our community, and with more loans scheduled to be approved in the next few months, we hope to continue supporting our communities with these loans for years to come.

## BRIGHT IDEAS GRANT WINNERS

Piedmont Electric is awarding 24 Bright Ideas Grants to teachers in our communities. Each year, NC electric cooperatives allocate more than \$660,000 in Bright Ideas grant funding. This year, more than \$24,900 of the funds will go to teachers in Piedmont EMC's area.

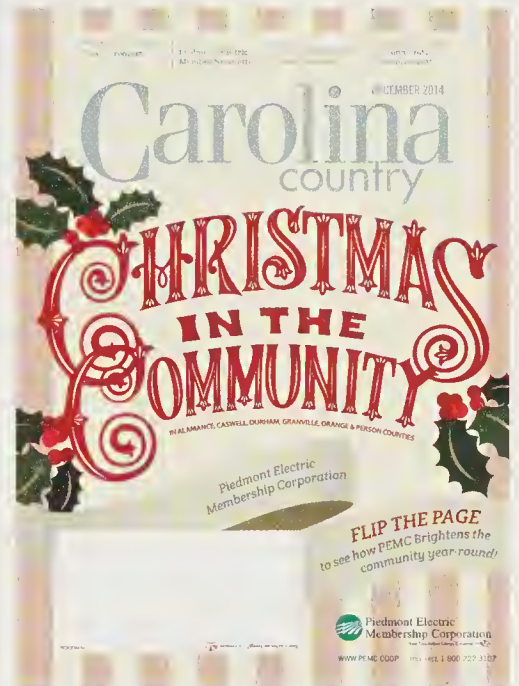
Over 3,000 students across Piedmont Electric's six counties will benefit from the approved projects for the 2014–2015 school year. For more information, including a list of award recipients, be sure to read next month's issue of the Connection newsletter.



DEC  
24–25

**Piedmont EMC  
will be closed for  
Christmas.**

Employees will be on call.  
Enjoy your holiday!



**CHECK OUT THE NEW COVER WRAP**  
to see how PEMC helps our community year-round!

Read about how our co-op day went in the  
**CO-OP DAY RECAP**  
PAGE 3

Piedmont Electric Membership Corporation is retiring  
**CAPITAL CREDITS**  
PAGE 4

Piedmont EMC's  
**ANNUAL FOOD & TOY  
DRIVE DEADLINE IS  
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12!**

Visit [www.pemc.coop](http://www.pemc.coop) for more details!



## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Each December, I use this column to reflect on the year Piedmont Electric Membership Corporation has had as a business and measure the impact we have had on the most important part of our cooperative, our members. This year, I'm proud to say that our commitment to the community was as strong as ever, as we rolled out a number of initiatives to improve the safety for our members and community, provide youth and educational opportunities, save money for our members and help economic development efforts for our service area.

In February, Piedmont Electric launched our new website, complete with new "emergency pages" that give members easier access to the information they need during emergency situations. A few days later, one of the worst ice storms this cooperative has experienced swept through our service area, but thanks to our new website and Facebook posts; members, news outlets and local officials were kept informed about restoration efforts.

In 2015, Piedmont Electric will continue to evaluate new ways to communicate with our members during emergencies. We will also continue to work with local officials to make our emergency restoration response as efficient as possible.

Our commitment to our schools and youth was unwavering throughout 2014. Piedmont Electric awarded 24 grants geared toward hands-on learning experiences to local teachers, totaling more than \$24,900, awarded six \$1,500 college scholarships, sent three middle school students to basketball camps and one high school student to Washington, DC, to meet our elected officials. Our cooperative also provided classroom safety demonstrations, school sponsorships, Earth Day Art Contests and career days at local schools. We also hosted a field



R.G. Brecheisen  
President & CEO of Piedmont EMC

## Thank you for being a member of PEMC!

trip for Duke University engineering students and a Duke University graduate student is determining the cost feasibility of a future solar battery project as part of his thesis. Piedmont Electric also launched a six-week high school Lineman Internship program this past summer. Our intern had the unique opportunity to work with our linemen out in the field and gain hands-on experience.

Over recent years, economic development has lagged in rural areas; however, thanks to Piedmont Electric's commitment to community, our cooperative has been awarded the most grants by the USDA for our Revolving Community Loan Program for Fiscal Year 2014. Through this program, your cooperative has made zero-interest loans to one school and four fire stations this year alone, improving the quality of life in our

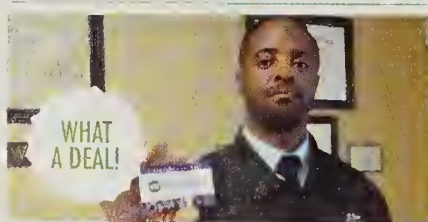
communities and helping to develop economic opportunities.

This year, I have been most proud of the way our members stepped up to reduce our peak by enrolling in our Energy Savings programs, such as Load Control, Time-of-Day Rates and Beat the Peak. By working together in the true cooperative spirit, we saved almost \$2 million in wholesale power costs!

Thank you for being a member of Piedmont Electric Membership Corporation! We couldn't be nearly as successful as we are today without the help of each and every one of our members. I cannot wait to see what great things we accomplish in 2015.

We thank you for allowing us to serve you and we wish you a wonderful holiday season and a safe and prosperous New Year!

## CO-OP CONNECTIONS® CARD DISCOUNTS



### BEYOND MEASURE BARBERING INSTITUTE

Mebane

Free haircut with first visit. \$5 haircuts or 20% off subsequent services.

Visit Piedmont EMC's website, [www.pemc.coop](http://www.pemc.coop), and click on the Co-op Connections® Card for discount details and a complete list of participating local and national businesses, dentists, chiropractors, vision care and pharmacies.

## SAVE 15%

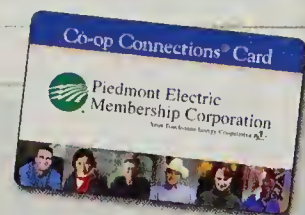
### THE HAMPTON INN

Chapel Hill

### HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS

Chapel Hill

15% discount off the first night's reservation.



### THE QUALITY INN

Chapel Hill

### THE HAMPTON INN

Corboro

## FREE

### AMAZING GRACE SALON AND SPA CENTER

Hillsborough

Free 'mini' day spa services on the first Saturday of every month.





Remove this four-page insert from the center of the magazine and take it with you, along with your Co-op Connections® Card, to save on holiday purchases!

### How does it work?

Visit any one of the local participating Co-op Connections® businesses in Alamance, Caswell, Durham, Granville, Orange and Person counties. Show it and save, it's as easy as that!

### Don't have a card?

Visit [connections.coop/about](http://connections.coop/about) to print your very own Co-op Connections® Card!

## Alamance County

### MEBANE

#### Avon\*

15% off orders of \$30 or more.

#### Beyond Measure Barbering Institute

Free haircut with first visit. \$5 haircuts or 20% off subsequent services.

#### Buffaloe Lanes\*

Buy one get one – see details on website.

#### Ciao Pizza\*

10% off total bill, (excludes alcohol).

#### Herbalife Independent Distributor\*\*

Free 45 minute wellness evaluation and personalized meal plan.

#### Iron Skillet at Petro Mart

10% off total food bill, (excludes alcohol).

# This Holiday Season

# SHOW IT & SAVE

Use your Co-op Connections® Card this Christmas to save on holiday purchases and activities!

#### Pomodoro Italian Kitchen and Pizzeria

10% off total bill per table, (excludes specials and alcohol).

#### Roma's Pizza and Italian Restaurant

10% off entire bill, (excludes alcohol).

#### Sake Japanese House

10% off total bill, (excludes alcohol).

#### Sheradin Chiropractic Center

\$50 for one-hour massage and/or 20% off chiropractic services.

#### Zanshin Karate and Fitness Center

One week of free classes.

#### Zaxby's\*

Buy one "Most Popular Menu Item" and get second item half off.



#### Beyond Measure Barbering Institute Mebane

*"As an educator, I have a responsibility to my community to provide excellent service and enhance the mindset of individuals as they prepare to excel as leaders in the field of barbering. The Co-op Connections® Card offers our barbering institute the opportunity to spread our barbering services to the greater community while enriching the lives of our students."*

—Instructor J. Carter, Beyond Measure



#### Down Home Garden Center Mebane

10% off purchase of \$25 or more.

\*Provides at-home service, check website for service area details

\*\*Provides online service, check website for ordering details

†Offer only valid at participating location, check website for physical address



## Caswell County

### Camp Springs Country Store

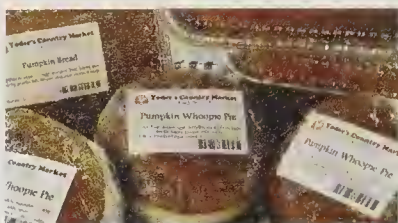
Discount on store item. Offer varies, check the store weekly.

### ElecTel Cooperative Federal Credit Union

Free box of checks with new checking account.

### Hushpuppies Restaurant

Free tea with purchase of a meal.



### Yoder's Country Market Blanch

Buy one scoop of ice cream, get one free.

## Durham County

### DURHAM

### Comfort Engineers\*

10% off service/repairs.

### Jimmy's Famous Hot Dogs

10% off total bill on Monday and Tuesday from 3–8 p.m.

### Planning Tomorrow\*

50% off home evaluation audit.

### Red Mountain Goodness, LLC\*

\$5 off a \$15 order (includes 100% natural goat milk soaps and shampoo bars).

### Sparrow Heating and Air Inc.\*

20% off first-time customer service call.

## Granville County

### AA Self Storage\*

\$50 off first month of rent.

### Herbalife Independent Distributor\*\*

Choose either free shipping or the Co-op Connections® program special.

### PartyLite\*\*.

\$5 off online purchase of \$30 or more.

## Orange County

### ORANGE

### Handy Andy's

10% off \$20 or more on hardware.

### CARRBORO

### Arts Center of Carrboro

5% off tuition for one art school class.

### Carolina Core Pilates

10% off pilates sessions (in studio).

### Jackson Hewitt Tax Service\*

\$25 off any federal income tax preparation.

### PTA Thrift Shop

\$5 off purchase of \$20 or more.

### Southeastern Camera

20% off photofinishing.

### The Hampton Inn\*

15% off first night's reservation.

### Tranquil Needles

50% off acupuncture.

### Vital Living/Healing Arts

25% off each 60 minute session.

### UniqueOrn Enterprises

\$50 off web design.

### Wilkinson Supply Company

10% off list price.

### CHAPEL HILL

### Chapel Hill Tennis Club

Offer varies, check the club periodically.

### Southern Vintage Table\*

10% off special event table decorating rental.

### Ten Thousand Villages\*

10% off entire purchase.

### The Hampton Inn\*

15% discount off the first night's reservation.

### Holiday Inn Express\*

15% discount off the first night's reservation.

### The Quality Inn\*

15% discount off the first night's reservation.

### HILLSBOROUGH

### Amazing Grace Salon and Spa Center

Free 'mini' day spa services on the first Saturday of every month.

### Apple Electronics & Security\*

15% off installed home security system.

### Bailey's Bee Supply & Local Honey Retail Store

\$1 off one quart of honey.



### The Hampton Inn Carrboro

***"Welcoming people to our community is our business."***

*The Co-op Connections® Card program presents a great opportunity for us to reach out to those who live locally, while welcoming other co-op members from around the country. For local cardholders, this holiday season is a great time to use your card with friends and family visiting!"*

—Katie, Hampton Inn Carrboro

### Braxton Tire

\$5 off oil change.

### Diversified Energy – Propane\*

Free tank change out and 40¢ off/gallon on first fill up (delivers to all counties).

### ElecTel Cooperative Federal Credit Union

Free box of checks with new checking account.

### Flower Patch

10% off cash and carry.

### Garland Truffles, Inc.\*

10% off purchase of truffle trees and 10% off farm tour.

### Hoof Beat Farm

10% off on Saturdays.

### K's Closet - Custom Boutique

10% off \$25 or more purchase.

### Mary Kay Cosmetics\*\*

20% off initial skin care purchase and color consultation.

### Optima Asset Management

Free one-hour initial consultation.

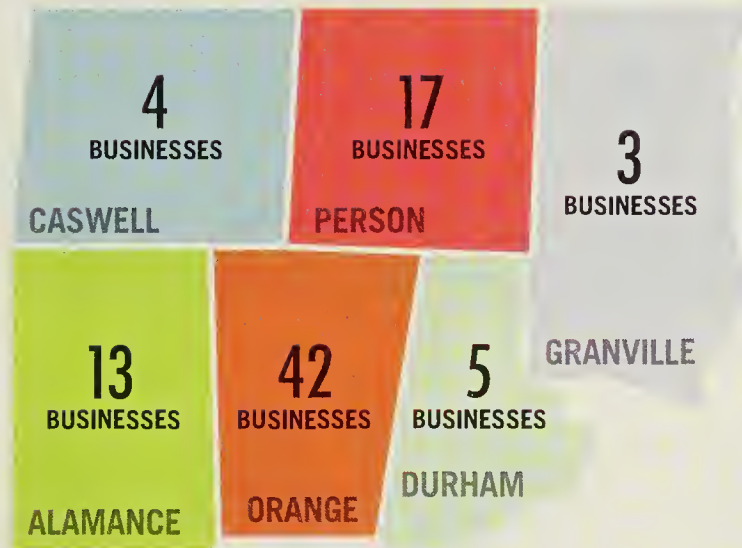
### Pizza Hut\*

Free order of breadsticks with pizza order.



# Join other Piedmont Electric members by supporting **LOCAL PARTICIPATING BUSINESSES**

Use Your Co-op Connections® Card in this six-county area to shop and save locally this holiday season!



## Use your card anywhere in the US!

Visit [connections.coop](http://connections.coop) to discover thousands of online, national and local discounts offered across the country. Use the site to find discounts right at home – or anywhere you travel this holiday season. There are 25,000 businesses participating, with new deals added daily.

## ➤ — National Offers and Discounts — ⚡



### Cash Back Mall

With Co-op Connections® Cash Back Mall, you can earn cash back on purchases of more than 300 million products from more than 4,000 leading online merchants. It's the same sites you're already shopping at today, but now you get more for your money. Visit [connections.coop/cashbackmall](http://connections.coop/cashbackmall) to download the free "Shopping Assistant" and start earning cash back on purchases right away!



#### Healthy Savings

##### Prescription

10% to 85% discount on prescription drugs



##### Dental

20% to 40% discount on most dental services



##### Vision

20% to 60% savings on eyewear



##### Hearing Aids

35% to 60% savings on hearing aids



##### Lab Work & Imaging

10% to 60% savings on lab testing and imaging services



##### Chiropractic

30% to 50% off chiropractic services

#### National Offers

Visit [connections.coop/national-featured](http://connections.coop/national-featured) for discount codes and details.

##### RedEnvelope

20% off online orders.

##### GiftCards.com

Up to 25% off merchant gift cards.

##### Omaha Steaks

Get an additional 15% off any purchase of \$59 or more.

##### GiftTree

15% off gift baskets and gifts at GiftTree.com

##### Personal Creations

Save 20% off your purchase.

##### Cherry Moon Farms

20% off online orders.

##### ProFlowers

Save 20% on all online orders.





# A Chance To Win This Holiday Season!

Use your Co-op Connections® Card at local participating businesses or online with the Cash Back Mall program, and you could be entered to win a gift card valued up to \$100! Contest ends December 15, 2014.

Visit [www.pemc.coop/save-energy-money/co-op-connections-card](http://www.pemc.coop/save-energy-money/co-op-connections-card) for contest drawing details and eligibility.



## Uniquitiques

Hillsborough

10% off final purchase (excludes boots).

## Positive Wellness-Shaklee 180

15% off purchase, plus free consultation.

## Property Pros Real Estate Team\*

Free one-year home warranty (value up to \$450) if you buy or sell with us.

## Qi Garden

10% off merchandise, (excludes featured artists and jewelers).

## Real Time Pain Relief\*

\$40 for a \$55 value pack (includes 15 travel packs).

## Silpada Jewelry\*\*/

15% off entire order.

## Tasty Bakery

Buy one dozen get one free doughnut.

## Therapeutic Massage by LMBT

\$10 off first session, or buy two sessions and get the third one half-off.

## Tokyo Express

Free tea with purchase of any dinner entree from 5-9 p.m.

## Triangle Computer Medic\*

20% off service charges

### HURDLE MILLS

## Orange County & Triangle Polo Clubs

Free t-shirt or other club memorabilia after sign-up for monthly lesson.

## Sunshine Lavender Farm\*

Free sachet with any online purchase.

### Person County

### ROXBORO

## 4 Lynns Boutique

15% off regularly priced merchandise.

## Brookland Eats

10% off entire bill, (excludes alcohol).

## Burger King\*

Buy one Whopper, get one free.

## Cash Family Medical Practice

\$20 new patient charge waived.

## Clarksville Station

25% off appetizers.

## Diversified Energy – Propane\*

Free tank change out and 40¢ off/gallon on first fill up (delivers to all counties).

## ElecTel Cooperative

## Federal Credit Union

Free box of checks with new checking account.

## Fox's Suzuki/Kawasaki Inc.

10% off motorcycle helmets and riding jackets.

## Jimmy's Famous Hot Dogs

10% off total bill on Monday and Tuesday from 3-8 p.m.

## La Cocina #4\*

10% off total bill, (excludes alcohol and other discounts).

## Quality Equipment:

## The John Deere People

10% off clothing and toys.

## Rolling Hills Garden Center

10% off any regularly priced item.

## Simply Charming Boutique

10% off total purchase.

## Southern Treasures

## Consignment & Antiques

10% off entire purchase.



## Vesuvio's Italian Restaurant

Roxboro

10% off total bill, (excludes specials and alcohol).

## Vesuvio's 2 Pizza & Grill

10% off total bill, (excludes specials and alcohol).

## The Village Gallery Florist

10% off any regular priced item.



ENERGY EFFICIENT WAYS TO HEAT YOUR HOME

Switch to an electric heat pump this winter to save on heating costs. Electric heat pumps not only keep your home toasty during the colder months, but also help cool your home in the summer – all at a lower cost than gas heat.

Rebates and loans are available to members who install an energy efficient electric heat pump with a SEER, or Seasonal Energy Efficiency

Seasonal Energy Efficiency Rate

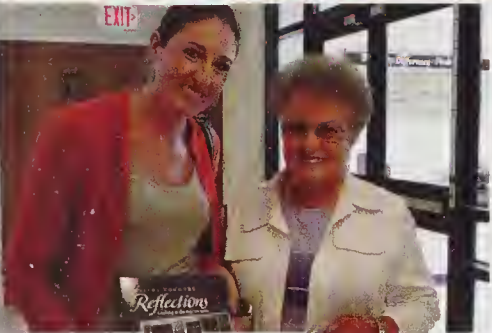
**SEER ≥ 15**

Rate, of 15 or higher. The rebate equals \$50 per ton, up to \$200 per system.

HVAC technical advice is also available, at no extra cost, to help you find the perfect system for your home.

For more information visit [pemc.coop](http://pemc.coop) and click 'Save Energy and Money'.

CO-OP DAY RECAP



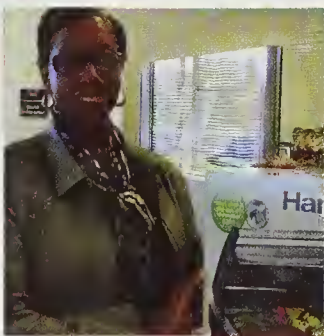
In honor of Co-op Month, celebrated each October, Piedmont Electric hosted a Co-op Day for members on Wednesday, October 22, at our three offices. Members enjoyed snacks, refreshments, a grand prize drawing and a spin on the prize wheel for the chance to win LED light bulbs, water heater wraps or several other prizes.

Seventy-five members won a 2-Pack of LED lights and three members won the Grand Prize of a flavor-searing grill. Overall, the day was a success and a great opportunity for members to celebrate their membership!

Our Lucky Winners...



**William Jefferson**  
Caswell County



**Sandra Stanfield**  
Roxboro



**Judy Close**  
Chapel Hill

BY THE NUMBERS

**6,139 MEMBERS** ↑ 6 MEMBERS  
are participating in the A/C Load Control Program

**4,686 MEMBERS** ↑ 7 MEMBERS  
are participating in the Electric Water Heater Load Control Program

**1,009 MEMBERS** ↑ 13 MEMBERS  
are participating in the FlexPay Program

**20 MEMBERS** ↑ 10 MEMBERS  
have turned in receipts for 146 LED bulbs, representing a total of 85,556 kWhs saved toward our Senote Bill 3 Mandate

**43 MEMBERS**  
received solar water heater rebates

**940 MEMBERS** ↑ 10 MEMBERS  
have installed electric water heater wrap kits

**610 RESIDENTIAL MEMBERS** ↑ 2 MEMBERS  
have signed up for Time-of-Day Rates

**1,029 VISITS** ↑ 7 VISITS  
made to TogetherWeSave.com, where you can learn more about the power of your electric cooperative membership

**524 MEMBERS**  
have signed up to participate in the "Beat the Peak" program

**1,353 MEMBERS**  
are participating in Project Helping Hand

THIS MONTH'S  
RIGHT-OF-WAY ACTIVITY

ORANGE COUNTY

- Oak Grove Church Rd.
- Mebone Oaks Rd.
- Jones Rd.
- Jim Minar Rd.
- Turner Rd.
- Nicks Rd.
- Pallard Acres Subdivision

(and surrounding areas)

Locations are SUBJECT TO CHANGE due to uncontrollable circumstances.





**Is your family ready for an ELECTRIC VEHICLE?**

Piedmont EMC has tools to help you make the best decision. Visit [pemc.coop/save-energy-money](http://pemc.coop/save-energy-money) and click "calculators and apps" to use our Electric Vehicle Calculator, and see how much you can save in fuel costs by switching to a hybrid or electric vehicle!

#### OFFICIAL NOTICE

##### CAPITAL CREDITS RETIREMENT

If you were a member of Piedmont Electric Membership Corporation in 1986, you will soon receive your share of capital credits for that year.

One of the major benefits of being a member of Piedmont EMC is that you are returned any money that is left over after all of our bills have been paid. The amount of these funds you receive is based on the amount you paid for the electricity consumed during the year of the retirement.

General retirement checks will be mailed to eligible members with owed retirements of \$20 or higher. Those who have capital credit accounts less than \$20 will see a credit on their energy bill. Inactive accounts will receive a check providing there is a current mailing address on file. Inactive members with less than \$20

in their capital credits account will have their payments held until the \$20 minimum is met in a future year.

The 2014 general retirement of capital credits will involve retiring approximately \$900,000 this year. In addition, over \$215,000 was returned to the estates of deceased members this year.

Your cooperative membership entitles you to this capital credit retirement whenever Piedmont EMC is financially able to approve these refunds and receives approval by the board of directors. Until a specific year is "retired" the funds are used for maintenance of the electrical grid, and to allow Piedmont EMC to meet the financial requirements of our lenders. Piedmont Electric has returned over \$19 million in Capital Credits to members since 1975.

If you are a member, please be sure to leave a forwarding address and contact information so we can reach you concerning your future Capital Credit payments. If you have any questions regarding Capital Credits, call 1.800.222.3107.

## PIEDMONT ELECTRIC CONNECTION

Published monthly for the members of Piedmont Electric Membership Corp.

2500 NC Highway 86 South  
PO Drawer 1179  
Hillsborough, NC 27278

R.G. Brecheisen  
President and CEO

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Roxboro 336.599.0151  
Elsewhere in North Carolina  
800.222.3107

## IF YOUR POWER GOES OUT, CALL US...

**800.449.2667**

Our automated outage reporting system uses your phone number to determine your service location. That's why it's important to update the number connected to your account. If your number has changed, or if you no longer have a land line, let us know by completing the form that comes in your monthly billing statement or calling 800.222.3107.

To report an outage 24 hours a day  
800.449.2667\*

To pay account and access account information by phone 24 hours a day  
877.999.3394\*

\*Voice instructions will direct you through the system.

Call 811 BEFORE you dig

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



# Understanding headache pain

*Knowing types and causes can help you choose the right treatment*

Whether it's a mild stress headache or a full-blown migraine, those who regularly battle headaches are continually looking for safe and effective remedies to alleviate the pain as quickly as possible.



*Migraines and tension headaches are among the common types of primary headaches — those that relate to pain sensitive areas of your head but do not signal a potential underlying disease.*

**T**he Mayo Clinic describes a headache as, “Pain in any region of the head. Headaches may occur on one or both sides of the head, be isolated to a certain location, radiate across the head from one point, or have a vise-like quality. A headache may be a sharp pain, throbbing sensation or dull ache. Headaches may appear gradually or suddenly, and they may last less than an hour or for several days.”

Understanding what kind of headache you're experiencing and what may have caused it can go a long way toward finding the ideal treatment, whether with heat and cold therapies, other natural remedies or medication.

Causes of headaches are as varied as the aches themselves. Migraines and tension headaches are among the common types of primary headaches — those that relate to pain

sensitive areas of your head but do not signal a potential underlying disease. Lifestyle factors such as alcohol, certain foods, changes to sleep, posture, skipped meals and stress can contribute to primary headaches.

Secondary headaches are caused by ailments ranging from influenza and sinusitis to aneurysm and stroke. Conditions such as concussion and dehydration can also cause secondary headaches.

## Seeking medical care

If you suspect your headache is the result of an underlying issue, consulting a physician can help you address the root problem.

In addition, symptoms such as confusion or trouble understanding speech, fainting, high fever, stiff neck, trouble seeing, speaking or walking, and nausea or vomiting are also signs


you should seek emergency attention immediately, according to Mayo Clinic experts.

Other indicators may signal the need to schedule a doctor's appointment, although not as urgently as if you are experiencing the symptoms just listed. These include an increase in headache frequency or severity; pain that does not improve after taking over-the-counter medication; and pain that affects your normal activities, such as working or sleeping.

## Home treatment options

Relieving your headache pain depends on the type of headache you're experiencing. Some can be relieved by over-the-counter medications, but numerous natural remedies can also be effective, without the potential side effects of drugs.

One example is heat or cold therapy, applied to your head or neck area. An example is Thermal-Aid Headache Relief System ([thermalaidthproducts.com](http://thermalaidthproducts.com)). The system treats pain, muscle tension and light sensitivity simultaneously and can be used for migraine, tension and stress headaches. The system includes a tube of 100 percent natural cream pain reliever that is applied directly to your temples and forehead, as well as a cold press eye pack that blocks light while delivering subtle pressure to ease forehead and temple tension.

Other natural pain management techniques include meditation, massage and rest. Small amounts of caffeine may also be effective, and other alternative therapies such as biofeedback and cognitive therapy are potential treatments. 

—FamilyFeatures.com



# Host a gaudy party to remember

*Deck the halls with ugly sweaters and tacky cakes*




The holiday season is all about making fun memories. Why not throw a party that no one will soon forget?

**S**pecifically, host your own ugly sweater party. It's simple. Tell everyone to show up in the tackiest holiday apparel they can find, whether from a thrift store or something they thought was cool at one time. At the end, hold a contest for the ugliest sweater. Award the winners in categories such as All-Around Ugliest, Most Original or Most Ridiculous. Get creative with the prizes, too. Find inexpensive and unique (read tacky) gifts, or hand out little first-place ribbons. Here are easy party ideas from Wilton, which specializes in cake decorating and bakeware products:

## Cookie decorating fun

Have guests decorate their own sweater cookies. Set up a decorating station with pre-baked vanilla cookies, and your friends can have a blast decorating with green and red icing and sprinkles. Have a photo session so guests can take pictures of their silly cookies to share online.

## Warm up with lattes

Who doesn't love sipping hot beverages with friends? Offer assorted liqueurs for an adults-only party. 

—Family Features.com



## Eggnog Ugly Sweater Cake

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 package (16.5 ounces) yellow cake mix | Buttercream Icing                          |
| $\frac{2}{3}$ cup eggnog                | Icing Colors: Juniper Green, Christmas Red |
| $\frac{1}{3}$ cup vegetable oil         | Holly Mix and Candy Cane Sprinkles         |
| 3 eggs                                  |  |
| $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon ground nutmeg    |  |

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Spray an Ugly Sweater Cake Pan with vegetable pan spray.

In a large bowl, beat cake mix, eggnog, oil, eggs and nutmeg with a mixer at low speed 30 seconds. Scrape bottom and sides of bowl; beat at medium speed 2 minutes. Spread batter evenly into prepared pan.

Bake 39–42 minutes or until toothpick inserted into center of cake comes out clean. Cool in the pan on a cooling grid 10 minutes. Remove from pan; cool completely on grid.

With a spatula, ice the cooled cake. Using tip 233 (optional) and green icing, pipe a tree on the cake. Using tip 46 (optional) and red icing, pipe outline neckline, sleeve cuffs and bottom sweater band. Attach sprinkles.

*Editor's note:* Ugly Sweater Cake Pans can be found at craft stores or online at [wilton.com](http://wilton.com) or [amazon.com](http://amazon.com).

Servings: 10 to 12



## Spirit of the Season Mocha Latte

- 2 cups very hot, strong-brewed coffee
- 2 cups Wilton Dark Cocoa Candy Melts (or similar dark cocoa candy that melts)
- 6 cups milk
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup chocolate syrup
- Assorted liqueurs and spirits (optional)\*

In a large bowl, pour coffee over Dark Cocoa Candy Melts; let sit to melt.

In a large microwave-safe bowl, heat milk and chocolate syrup until steaming, about 4 minutes. Whisk milk vigorously to froth. Whisk in candy mixture until combined.

Divide lattes evenly among eight mugs. If desired, add 1 ounce of your choice of liqueur to each drink.

\* Options include peppermint schnapps, Irish cream liqueur, creamy rum liqueur, chocolate-flavored liqueur, cinnamon schnapps and caramel-flavored vodka.

Servings: 8



# CAROLINA COUNTRY scenes

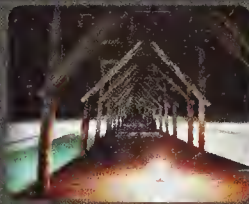
## Photo of the month

### Look!

The shrimp boats were out on a nice day in December on the Crystal Coast. The kids were admiring all the birds trying to get a meal or two from those trawlers.

*Amanda Robles, Swansboro  
Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative*

The Photo of the Month comes from those that scored an honorable mention from the judges in our 2014 photo contest ("Carolina Country Scenes," February 2014). See even more at the Photo of the Week on our website [carolinacountry.com](http://carolinacountry.com).



Send us your favorite photo (North Carolina people or scenes) and the story that goes with it. We will pay \$50 for each one that we publish in our Carolina Country Scenes gallery in the February 2015 magazine. Judges will select more for a new "Photo of the Month" feature and we'll pay \$50 for those.



### RULES:

Deadline: December 10, 2014.

One entry per household.

Digital photos should be a minimum of 1200 by 1800 pixels. Prints a minimum of 4 x 6 inches.

Include your name, electric co-op, mailing address and e-mail address or phone number.

If you want your print returned, include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. (We will not return others.)

We retain reprint rights.

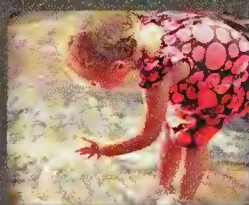
We will post on our websites more entries than we publish, but can't pay for those submissions. (Let us know if you don't agree to this.)

### SEND TO:

**Online:** [carolinacountry.com](http://carolinacountry.com)

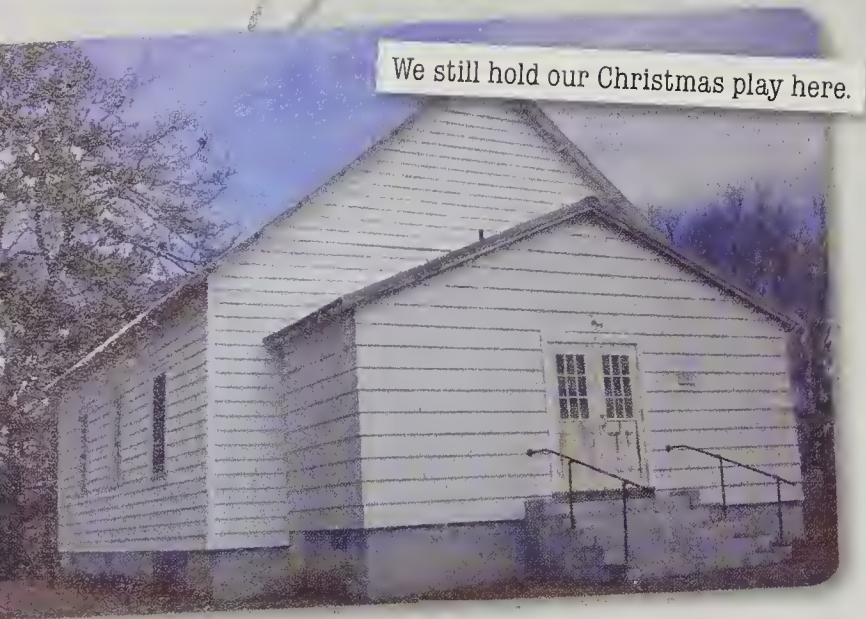
**Mail:** Carolina Country Photo Contest  
3400 Sumner Blvd.  
Raleigh, NC 27616

## CAROLINA COUNTRY SCENES photo contest





# I Remember...



## The Old Church at Laurel Springs

This is the “Old Church” at Laurel Springs. It was built in 1908. Inside, a portrait of William B. Southern hangs beside the pulpit. It states that he was the founder and builder of the first church at Laurel Springs. He was born March 4, 1836, and died June 20, 1915.

The Primitive Baptist Association meetings were held here once a year up until 1997. Five different churches and up to 10 different preachers from all over would come for these all-day, all-weekend-long meetings. My aunt Lucille Oakley remembers these meetings and tells of how wonderful they were with all the singing, preaching and fellowship.

This church holds many memories for the surrounding community. My church, Laurel Springs Baptist Church, is making new memories in it. We still hold our special services in this church, including our annual Old Fashion Day and Christmas play. We want to keep the memories alive and honor those who have worked so hard for the community to have a place of worship.

*Sonya S. Boyd, Dobson, Surry-Yadkin EMC*

## Christmas in hard times

When I was a little girl growing up in Wilkes County, times were hard. My daddy was gone most of the time working or trying to find work. I know my parents did the best they could.

When Christmas came, my mom, my four little brothers and I would go into the woods to find a tree. We would bring it in, and my mom would cut decorations from paper for the tree. We all loved it and couldn’t wait until Christmas morning.

I placed a chair at the fireplace and left a note asking Santa to bring me a doll. Morning came and I ran to the chair: no doll. Santa had left us a bag with an apple, orange, nuts and hard candy.

We were thankful for the blessings we had and that all of us were together.

*Evelyn Robertson, Lexington, EnergyUnited*

## The old family roasting pan

Growing up, I was my mother’s “sous-chef,” learning the recipes handed down through our generations. My grandmother passed the torch to my aunt, who then passed it to my mother. As if in the Thanksgiving Olympics, the torch is now in my possession, and I continue to strive for gold.

My mom used an old beat-up, much-loved roasting pan that her mother made the turkeys in. Mom said by using the pan, it felt like her mom’s presence was near, still helping with the feast. So, like my mother, I continue to use the old beat-up family roasting pan. It brings my mother’s memory close during the holidays.

I may try new dishes every year, but every year it’s the tried-and-true dishes we enjoy the most, the comfort foods we’ve eaten with loved ones now past. Just like a scent, taste can bring back memories.

Every family has its own “recipe” for tradition that is special to them. For me, it’s waking up early to start prepping the turkey as the Macy’s parade is in full swing. My grandmother’s roasting pan symbolizes family brought together year after year to celebrate being thankful for one another.

*Cara Perciaccanto, Youngsville, Wake Electric*

## SEND US YOUR *Memories*

We’ll pay \$50 for those we publish in the magazine. We can put even more on our internet sites, but can’t pay for them. (If you don’t want them on the Internet, let us know.)

### Requirements:

1. Maximum 500 words.
2. Photos must be at least 600kb or 300 by 300 pixels.
3. No more than 7 per month.
4. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope you want your return.
5. We retain your rights.
6. Include your name, mailing address and the name of your electric cooperative. Also, your phone number or e-mail address in case of questions.
7. Online: [carolinacountry.com/contact](http://carolinacountry.com/contact)  
E-mail (“Memories” in subject line.): [remember@carolinacountry.com](mailto:remember@carolinacountry.com)  
Or by U.S. mail: I Remember, Carolina Country, 3400 Sumner Blvd., Raleigh, NC 27616





## When Aunt Willie met Santa

My Aunt Willie is such a character. You will never meet any one more precious and giving. She told me of the Christmas of 1945, the one she will always remember, when she was 7 years old. A new baby had been born on the 21st, and now there were 12 children in the family. Christmas was simple. A peppermint stick, an orange and some apples would be found hanging in the stockings.

The country church had its Christmas play, and when Santa walked in, he frightened Willie, who went jumping over benches to get away. On the walk home that evening, Santa emerged from the cornfield with a sack of oranges on his back. Willie ran home as fast as she could and jumped in bed with her mama and the new baby. Santa Claus came walking into the house, straight over to the bed and gave Willie two dimes. She threw them back at him and crawled under the bed. She stayed under the bed until Santa left.

Years later she found out Santa was her daddy. Her mama had taken white feed sacks and dyed them red and made the Santa suit.

*Phyllis Edwards, Union Mills, Rutherford EMC*

## The perfect Christmas tree

I grew up on a farm in Stokes County that had plenty of woods, streams and other farms nearby. A few weeks before Christmas, Mother would let us children roam the woods in search of a nice tree we would claim for our Christmas tree. We would return closer to the holiday to cut the cedar and bring it home.

For some reason one year, we could not find anything suitable. Finally, only two of us were left to search, one brother and myself. After a day of exhausting ourselves, we came through the yard of a neighbor on our way home, and there on the lower part of the yard was a perfect cedar. This neighbor and his wife were in Florida for the winter, so we brought out our axe and came home with the perfect tree. Our mother could not believe we had found such a suitable tree, perfect in shape and size — just what we had been looking for.

We never told our family the story of the tree, or we would have needed a pillow to sit on for quite some time. And we never knew what the neighbor thought had happened to the tree or if the huge pile of leaves hid all the evidence.

*Ruth Watson, Mt. Airy, Surry-Yadkin EMC*



Here's how they looked the summer of 1945 just months before Aunt Willie's memorable Christmas. She is the girl on the right.

## Granddaddy's teeth

Children exploring the forbidden areas of home is only natural. What children have not ventured into their parents' bedroom and opened the drawer of personal belongings we were forbidden to enter? I remember taking my life into my 6-year-old hands by opening the middle drawer in the chest belonging to my mother. As I carefully opened it slowly and quietly, the smell of her black leather gloves and tubes of lipstick wax would be released and waft up into my senses. The colorful army of small glass bottles of fingernail polish standing at attention would clink together threatening to give me away, and the smell of perfume would fill the air.

One day I got more than I bargained for when I went exploring in my grandparents' bathroom. I was frightened by a pair of teeth giving me a sinister grin from within a highball glass. The full set of teeth seemed to be snarling at me, and I couldn't tell whether in anger or in pain. I'd never seen teeth outside the confines of a face, and here with no lips to hide behind, these teeth were separate from a face and staring at me.

My older brother came up behind me and asked, "What are you doing in here?" I pointed to the teeth and he gave me a hard shove. "Quit being stupid. You know those are Granddaddy's teeth."

Granddaddy's teeth? How did Granddaddy's teeth get out of his mouth and into this glass? How could Granddaddy function with no teeth? My mind began to go wild entertaining the possibilities.

From that day forward I had a healthy fear of my grandmother as well as a suspicious eye. A petite-framed, yet tough woman, I reasoned she had caught Granddaddy with a swift and sudden left hook to the jaw and was not to be trifled with.

*Charles Jason Canady, Fayetteville*





**Q**  
Do you  
know...

The U.S. has lost more than half of the wetlands in the lower 48 states? Wetlands have many important functions that benefit people and wildlife. They collect and hold flood waters, absorb wind and tidal forces, provide places of beauty and host many recreational activities. Wetlands purify water as it flows through, and wetland plants help control water erosion.

To learn more: [learnnc.org/lp/editions/cede\\_wetlands](http://learnnc.org/lp/editions/cede_wetlands)

## Ocean Pals poster contest

Beneath the Sea's Ocean Pals Poster Contest for Children is an environmental education-through-art program that encourages young people to become aware of and share their concerns for the marine environment. The 2015 poster contest theme is "My Wetlands—Water Is Life!"

Entries are accepted in four divisions: grades K–2, 3–5, 6–8, and 9–12. The top four finalists within each division, within each school, will be accepted into the regional contest. Regional winners then advance to the national competition.

Prizes include savings bonds. Entries are due Monday, December 22, 2014. For entry rules, and to see past winning posters, visit [beneaththesea.org](http://beneaththesea.org).

## tar heel lessons

a guide to NC for teachers and students



## Field trip!

The East Carolina Village & Farm Museum in Greenville offers more than 15 historic outbuildings and roughly 2,000 artifacts to inspire students to learn about life in Pitt County from 1840-1940.

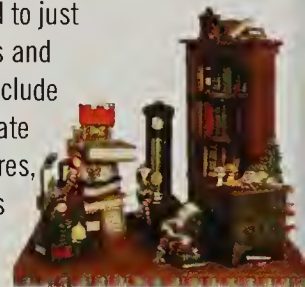
There's a building featuring occupational artifacts, including old Daily Reflector newspaper printing presses, a Greenville Bank safe, Drum's Hatchery incubators, grist mills and office machines, a church built in the late 1700s with original pews, log smokehouse, and an annex containing home items, including a stove, icebox and a series of washing machines. Other engaging attractions include a general store with a post office, a schoolhouse, farm water tower, 1915 sawmill steam engine and other machinery and farm tools. The museum and village is open by appointment only.

For tours and events info: (252) 756-5432 or [eastcarolinavillage.org](http://eastcarolinavillage.org).



## Gingerbread House Display

Every year gingerbread artists, young and old, transform flour, sugar and other baking edibles into complex holiday creations at the National Gingerbread House Competition in Asheville. Despite the name, their creations are not limited to just houses and also include elaborate creatures, sleighs and more.



After prizes are awarded in November, the display stays up for viewing through January 1, 2015. It's open to the general public Sunday through Thursday (excluding holidays) at the Omni Grove Park Inn. There is a \$10 parking fee (half of each charge goes to local not-for-profits). (800) 438-5800 or [groveparkinn.com/gingerbread](http://groveparkinn.com/gingerbread)



See a video of past competition at [carolinacountry.com](http://carolinacountry.com).



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A \_ \_ \_ \_ \_  
s a s l l d b r c m e b

-The Pundit

Use the capital letters in the code key  
below to fill in the blanks above.

A D E H I M P U Y  
means s c r a m b l e d



## MATCHBOXES

Each digit in this multiplication problem stands for the letter below it. Solve the problem and write your answer in the box tops. Then match the digits with the letters in the code key below to find a hidden word in your answer.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9  
C A V L E S U O I D

1	9	1	0	8	3
A	D	A	C	I	L

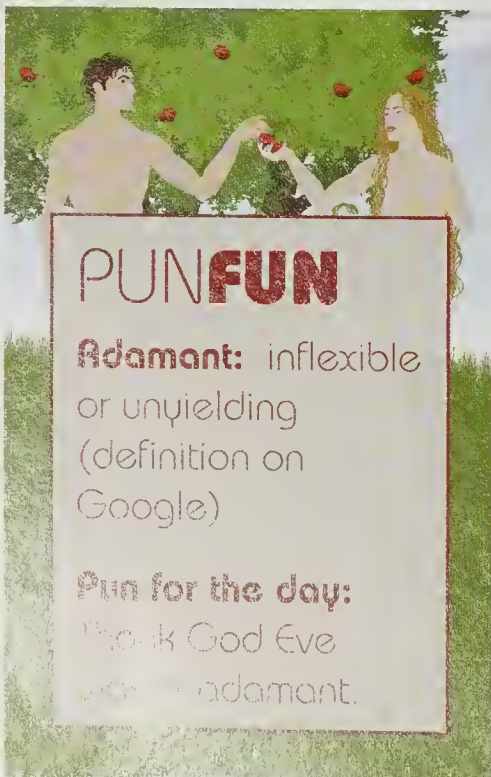
x 3  
L


## Another Square Puzzle

Can you arrange these four digits to create a perfect square?

2 4 6 8

\_ \_ x \_ \_ = \_ \_ \_ \_



## PUN FUN

**Adamant:** inflexible or unyielding (definition on Google)

**Pun for the day:**  
Thank God Eve  
was so adamant.

## UNSCRAMBLIT

Tuckasege(e), a community spelled with two e's in Gaston County on the Catawba River and another spelled with three e's in Jackson County on the Tuckasegee River, is named for a Cherokee Indian word meaning



C \_ \_ \_ \_ \_  
n l u d a r m c e s l l u b r m



Use the capital letters in the code key below to fill in the blanks above.  
A C E G I L N P R T W means  
u n s c r a m b l e d

For answers, please see page 39



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# In-floor electric heating

*These systems offer benefits that go beyond warming cold feet*

Electric in-floor heating, which can be used under tile, carpeting and hardwood, pinpoints and improves comfort. Not only that, it can allow you to lower the thermostat and still feel cozy and warm.

A home loses less heat through the walls, ceiling and windows when the indoor temperature is lower. The amount of electricity used is typically several percentage points less for each degree the thermostat is set lower. With improved comfort from in-floor heating, you should be able to lower the thermostat setting considerably and not feel chilly.

Another energy-saving advantage of in-floor heating is that each room can have a thermostat, allowing you to set different temperatures in various rooms and heat them as needed.

Instead of heating the room air, a warm floor radiates heat upward to your body. When your feet are warm, your entire body feels warm. In-floor heating reduces the extent of heat stratification where the hot air from a forced-air system naturally collects upward, near the ceiling.

In-floor heating is most commonly used in a concrete or tile floor with high thermal mass, but some types are designed to be used under carpeting, hardwood or laminate flooring. It can actually provide better comfort under carpet and hardwood because their low thermal mass allows the system to respond faster to thermostat changes.



*Electric radiant heating cable/mesh is placed on a kitchen floor before the ceramic tile is installed. The manufacturer can advise about how much to use.*

In a concrete slab or under a tile floor, electric heating cable is usually laid in a serpentine pattern. In one design by Nuheat, long cable guides are nailed along the outer edges of the floor. Selecting how many slots to skip between cables determines the total cable length and heat output. It also simplifies even spacing. Once the cable is in place, it is covered with concrete or thinset for tiles.

For use with carpeting, thin mats or sheets with electric cable embedded in them are placed on the floor before the carpeting is laid. The manufacturer can calculate the amount your rooms need, and the cable is available in 120 or 240 voltages.

WarmlyYours has a unique design with thin electric heating cables embedded in a strong fiberglass mesh. This is particularly effective for use under hardwood flooring and laminate. First check with your hardwood flooring manufacturer about the maximum allowable temperature to avoid excessive drying of the wood. Consider

installing a special programmable thermostat with a laminate and engineered wood setting to protect the materials.

Another design by Heatizon uses a low-voltage heating mesh. This mesh is only about one-eighth inch thick and is stapled directly to the subflooring. It is low-voltage and installation is relatively easy. WarmlyYours also offers a wafer-thin heating kit that is placed between the pad and the carpet.

With in-floor heating, you don't have to cover your entire house (or even an entire room), so you can add to the system as your budget allows. People sometimes add small custom mats or sheets in a dressing area or workspace. At a home center store, a 10-foot by 30-inch heating mat costs about \$200, and a matching programmable thermostat is about \$140. **G**

*Jim Dulley is an engineer and a columnist for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. Send inquiries to James Dulley, Carolina Country, 6906 Royalgreen Dr., Cincinnati, Ohio, 45244, or visit [dulley.com](http://dulley.com)*

## Resources

These companies offer electric in-floor heating systems:

Calorique (800) 922-9276 [calorique.com](http://calorique.com)

Emerson (800) 621-1506 [emersonindustrial.com](http://emersonindustrial.com)

Heatizon (888) 239-1232 [heatizon.com](http://heatizon.com)

Nuheat (800) 778-0276 [nuheat.com](http://nuheat.com)

Orbit Radiant Heating (888) 895-0958  
[orbitradiantheating.com](http://orbitradiantheating.com)

Suntouch (888) 432-8932 [suntouch.net](http://suntouch.net)

WarmlyYours (800) 875-5285 [warmlyyours.com](http://warmlyyours.com)



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*Historic Wessington mansion will make its public debut at this year's Christmas Candlelight Tour in Edenton. Set for Friday and Saturday, Dec. 12–13, the tour showcases more than a dozen private and public historic houses decorated in traditional holiday style. A live nativity is also planned Friday evening. (252) 482-7800 or [ehcnc.org/Christmas](http://ehcnc.org/Christmas)*

### **Mountains** (west of I-77)

#### **Toe River Holiday Studio Tour**

Dec. 5–7, Burnsville  
(828) 682-7215  
[toeriverarts.org](http://toeriverarts.org)

#### **Candletea & Christmas Bazaar**

Dec. 6, Newton  
(828) 294-4802  
[newhopemoravian.org](http://newhopemoravian.org)

#### **Christmas Candlelight Tour**

Vance Birthplace  
Dec. 6, Weaverville  
(828) 645-6706  
[nchistoricsites.org/vance](http://nchistoricsites.org/vance)

#### **Walk To The Stable**

Dec. 6–7, Statesville  
(704) 872-6097  
[newsalemumc.com](http://newsalemumc.com)

#### **B. J. Thomas Concert**

Home for Christmas theme  
Dec. 11, Morganton  
(800) 939-7469  
[commoonline.org](http://commoonline.org)

#### **Thomas Wolfe's Gimcracks Day**

Make ornaments, see author's home  
Dec. 13, Asheville  
(828) 253-8304  
[nccultureevents.org](http://nccultureevents.org)

### **Winter On The Western Frontier**

Dec. 13, Statesville  
(704) 873-5882  
[nccultureevents.com](http://nccultureevents.com)

### **ONGOING**

#### **Street Dance**

Monday nights, Hendersonville  
(828) 693-9708  
[historichendersonville.org](http://historichendersonville.org)

#### **Carson House Guided Tours**

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Marion  
(828) 724-4948  
[www.historiccarsonhouse.com](http://www.historiccarsonhouse.com)

#### **Bluegrass Music Jam**

Thursdays, Marion  
(828) 652-2215

#### **High Country Lights**

Glade Valley Fire Department  
Through Jan. 1, Ennice  
(336) 657-8199  
[highcountrysights.com](http://highcountrysights.com)

#### **Holiday Art & Craft Show**

Through Jan. 15, Valdese  
(828) 879-2129  
[visitvaldese.com](http://visitvaldese.com)

### **Piedmont** (between I-77 & I-95)

#### **Jingle On Main**

Dec. 4, Roxboro  
(336) 322-2102  
[piedmontcc.edu/jingle](http://piedmontcc.edu/jingle)

#### **Symphonic Band Concert**

Dec. 4, Fayetteville  
(910) 630-7000  
[methodist.edu](http://methodist.edu)

#### **Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony**

Dec. 4, Fort Bragg  
(910) 643-6134  
[fortbraggmwr.com](http://fortbraggmwr.com)

#### **Christmas Tree Lighting**

Dec. 5, Stallings  
(74) 821-8557  
[stallingsnc.org](http://stallingsnc.org)

#### **Handel's Messiah**

N.C. Symphony  
Dec. 5–6, Raleigh  
(919) 733-2750  
[nccultureevents.com](http://nccultureevents.com)

#### **Christmas At the Big House & At The Quarters**

Historic Stagville  
Dec. 6, Durham  
(919) 620-0120  
[nccultureevents.com](http://nccultureevents.com)

### **A Colonial Christmas**

#### **Joel Lane House**

Dec. 6, Raleigh  
(919) 833-3431  
[joellane.org](http://joellane.org)

#### **Christmas Parade & Festival of Lights**

Dec. 6, Hope Mills  
(910) 426-4109

#### **Holiday Pops & Holiday Lights**

Dec. 6, Fayetteville  
(910) 433-4690  
[fayettevillesymphony.com](http://fayettevillesymphony.com)

#### **Welcome To December Christmas Concert**

Dec. 6, Lexington  
(336) 956-8814  
[lexingtonchoralsociety.org](http://lexingtonchoralsociety.org)

#### **Comedian Jerry Carroll**

Dec. 6, Roxboro  
(336) 597-1709  
[personcounty.net](http://personcounty.net)

#### **Christmas Holiday Shoppe Craft Show**

Dec. 6, Chapel Hill  
(919) 929-1546  
[stmhsa.org](http://stmhsa.org)



**Holiday House Tour**  
Dec. 6, Chapel Hill  
(919) 942-7818  
[preservationchapelhill.org](http://preservationchapelhill.org)

**Christmas In Carolinas**  
Bennett Place  
Dec. 6, Durham  
(919) 383-4345  
[nccultureevents.com](http://nccultureevents.com)

**Christmas For The Birds**  
Town Creek Indian Mound  
Dec. 6, Mt. Gilead  
(910) 439-6802  
[nccultureevents.com](http://nccultureevents.com)

**Christmas Historic Home Tour**  
Dec. 6, Wake Forest  
(919) 435-9421  
[wakeforestnc.gov](http://wakeforestnc.gov)

**Santa's Craft Show**  
Dec. 6, Charlotte  
(704) 843-0525

**The Nutcracker**  
Performed by Carolina Ballet  
Dec. 6-7, Chapel Hill  
(919) 843-3333  
[www.carolinaperformingarts.org](http://www.carolinaperformingarts.org)

**FeST**  
Arts & crafts  
Dec. 6-7, Hillsborough  
(919) 732-9308  
[stmatthewshillsborough.org](http://stmatthewshillsborough.org)

**Visions Of Sugarplums**  
Holiday Art & Gift Show  
Dec. 6-8, Raleigh  
(919) 847-4868

**Christmas Craft Show**  
Dec. 7, Hillsborough  
(919) 732-8714

**Holiday Home Tour**  
Dec. 7, Hillsborough  
(919) 732-8156  
[hillsboroughchamber.com](http://hillsboroughchamber.com)

**Holiday Spectacular**  
Dec. 7, Fayetteville  
(910) 672-1571  
[uncfsu.edu](http://uncfsu.edu)

**Poinsettia Display**  
Dec. 7, King  
(336) 983-4107  
[mitchellsnurseryandgreenhouse.com](http://mitchellsnurseryandgreenhouse.com)

**Handel's Messiah**  
N.C. Symphony at Pinecrest H.S.  
Dec. 7, Southern Pines  
(919) 733-2750  
[nccultureevents.com](http://nccultureevents.com)

**Swing On! Christmas Concert**  
Dec. 7, Asheboro  
(336) 626-1240  
[garyrlewis.com](http://garyrlewis.com)

**The Nutcracker**  
City Youth Ballet  
Dec. 7, Albemarle  
(704) 550-1574  
[uwharrieyoutharts.com](http://uwharrieyoutharts.com)

**Governor's Tree-lighting Ceremony**  
At the State Capitol  
Dec. 11, Raleigh  
(919) 733-4994  
[nccultureevents.com](http://nccultureevents.com)

**Pianist Thomas Pandolffi**  
Dec. 11, Rocky Mount  
(252) 985-5197  
[ncwc.edu](http://ncwc.edu)

**State Capitol Open House**  
Dec. 11-13, Raleigh  
(919) 733-4994  
[nccultureevents.com](http://nccultureevents.com)

**Christmas Parade**  
Dec. 13, Fayetteville  
(910) 323-1040  
[rotarychristmasparade.com](http://rotarychristmasparade.com)

**Classical Christmas**  
N.C. Symphony at Memorial Hall  
Dec. 13, Chapel Hill  
(919) 733-2750  
[nccultureevents.com](http://nccultureevents.com)

**Holiday House Tour**  
Dec. 13-14, Chapel Hill  
(919) 942-7818  
[preservationchapelhill.org](http://preservationchapelhill.org)

**It's A Wonderful Life**  
Classic Movie Sunday series  
Dec. 14, Roxboro  
(336) 597-1709  
[personcounty.net](http://personcounty.net)

**Holiday Jubilee**  
Dec. 14, Fayetteville  
(910) 486-1330  
[museumofthecapefear.ncdcr.gov](http://museumofthecapefear.ncdcr.gov)

**Celebration Of The Nativity**  
Dec. 14, Denton  
(336) 859-4742

**Historic Churches Tour**  
Dec. 15, Fayetteville  
(910) 433-1457

**A Christmas Carol!**  
Dec. 18-19, Chapel Hill  
(919) 732-7451  
[burwellschool.org](http://burwellschool.org)

**A Pink Martini Christmas**  
N.C. Symphony at Meymandi Hall  
Dec. 19-20, Raleigh  
(919) 733-2750  
[nccultureevents.com](http://nccultureevents.com)

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**Durham Civil War Roundtable**  
Third Thursdays, Durham  
(919) 643-0466

**Art After Hours**  
Second Fridays, Wake Forest  
(919) 570-0765  
[www.sunflowerstudiowf.com](http://www.sunflowerstudiowf.com)

**Betty Lynn (Thelma Lou)**  
**Appearance at Andy Griffith Museum**  
Third Fridays, Mount Airy  
(336) 786-7998  
[www.visitmayberry.com](http://www.visitmayberry.com)

**Fourth Friday**  
Arts, shopping  
Fayetteville  
(910) 483-5311  
[www.theartscouncil.org](http://www.theartscouncil.org)

**Black & White**  
Exhibition of two-three  
dimensional works  
Through Dec. 13, Fayetteville  
(910) 323-1776  
[theartscouncil.com](http://theartscouncil.com)

**After Appomattox:**  
**N.C. Civil War Monuments**  
Through Dec. 13, High Point  
(336) 885-1859  
[highpointmuseum.org](http://highpointmuseum.org)

**A Christmas Carol**  
Through Dec. 21, Fayetteville  
(910) 678-7186  
[gilberttheater.com](http://gilberttheater.com)

**Beach & Jazzy Fridays**  
Through Dec. 26, Wagram  
(910) 369-0411  
[cypressbendvineyards.com](http://cypressbendvineyards.com)

**Music Barn**  
Saturday evenings  
Through Dec. 31, Mt. Gilead  
(910) 220-6426  
[mgmusicbarn.com](http://mgmusicbarn.com)

**Constitution Ratification Exhibit**  
Through Dec. 31, Fayetteville  
(910) 433-1457  
[fcpr.us/transportation\\_museum.aspx](http://fcpr.us/transportation_museum.aspx)

**Face of Folk**  
**30 Years of PineCone exhibit**  
Through Dec. 31, Raleigh  
(919) 996-2229  
[cityofraleighmuseum.org](http://cityofraleighmuseum.org)

**Lafayette Exhibit**  
Through Jan. 3, 2015, Fayetteville  
(910) 433-1457  
[fcpr.us/transportation\\_museum.aspx](http://fcpr.us/transportation_museum.aspx)

**A Victorian Christmas**  
Through Jan. 5, Fayetteville  
(910) 486-1330  
[museumofthecapefear.ncdcr.gov](http://museumofthecapefear.ncdcr.gov)

**Stagville: Black & White Photo Exhibit**  
Through Jan. 2015, Raleigh  
(919) 807-7900  
[ncmuseumofhistory.org](http://ncmuseumofhistory.org)

**Singing Christmas Tree**  
Dec. 4-7, Fayetteville  
(910) 484-3191  
[snydermbc.com](http://snydermbc.com)

**Christmas In The Park**  
Dec. 5-21, Fayetteville  
(910) 433-1547  
[fcpr.us](http://fcpr.us)

**Sadie's Holiday Sale**  
Dec. 5-24, Lenoir  
(828) 754-2486  
[caldwellarts.com](http://caldwellarts.com)

**The Nutcracker**  
N.C. State Ballet  
Dec. 7-14, Fayetteville  
(800) 745-3000  
[ncstateballet.com](http://ncstateballet.com)

**Holiday Lights In Garden**  
Dec. 10-23, Fayetteville  
(910) 486-0221  
[capefearbg.org](http://capefearbg.org)

**Best Christmas Pageant Ever**  
Dec. 11-21, Fayetteville  
(910) 323-4234  
[cfrt.org](http://cfrt.org)

**Rails To Christmas**  
Railcar rides  
Dec. 12-20, Red Springs  
(910) 617-1213  
[redspringsandnorthern.com](http://redspringsandnorthern.com)

**Listing Deadlines:**  
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For March: Jan. 25

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Or e-mail [events@carolinacountry.com](mailto:events@carolinacountry.com).



**The SantaLand Diaries**  
Dec. 12–20, Fayetteville  
(910) 323-4234  
cfrt.org

**Disney On Ice: Frozen**  
Dec. 17–21, Fayetteville  
(910) 438-4100  
crowncomplexnc.com

### Coast (east of I-95)

**Christmas In The City**  
Dec. 4, Clinton  
(910) 590-0007  
sampsomhmc.org

**Christmas Concert**  
Dec. 4–5, Caswell Beach  
(910) 363-4183  
sea-notes.com

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Museum of the Albemarle  
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**Holiday Open House**  
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**Tryon's Tots: A Dixon Christmas**  
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**Holiday Pops**  
**NC Symphony Kenan Auditorium**  
Dec. 10, Wilmington  
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**Christmas Parade**  
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# Piecing together a closed crawl space

**Q:** I'd like to close my crawl space but I'm not sure where to begin. A company that does pest control and crawl space work gave me a quote that includes closing the vents, laying plastic over the soil and installing a dehumidifier. Is this all I need?

**A:** It can be daunting to hire a professional to do work when you are not sure what needs to be done. For starters, a closed crawl space is more than just closed vents, plastic and a dehumidifier. To close a crawl space, let's break down the required parts into four manageable categories.

## Safety first!

Gas furnaces or gas water heaters located in the closed crawl space must be direct-vented or power-vented. This eliminates the opportunity for harmful gases to leak and linger in the closed crawl space. Another safety consideration is radon testing, which is recommended for all homes by the U.S. Surgeon General and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA recommends that all homes with radon concentration of 4 picocuries per liter and greater inside the living space be mitigated. For more information, contact the North Carolina Radon Program at [ncradon.org](http://ncradon.org) or call (919) 814-2250.

## The box

Think of the crawl space as GladWare—you know, the plastic containers that store leftover soup or peach cobbler. Like GladWare, a closed crawl space needs to be sealed tight so no outside air gets inside. To build this airtight box, contractors install plastic sheeting over the soil plus the masonry walls and piers, and they overlap and seal the seams. They will also seal with caulk or foam all holes and gaps linking the crawl space to the great outdoors and the interior of your home. This includes installing weatherstripping on the crawl space doors and covering crawl space vents with rigid foam or wood. Once all six sides of this crawl space "box" are sealed, insulation should be installed either on the perimeter walls or touching the wood subfloor.

## Pest control

A 3-inch tall portion of the foundation wall should remain visible immediately below the wood floor framing to allow for termite inspections. Be sure to check with your pest management professional and contractor to avoid any problems with this change.

## Water

Managing water and water vapor are very important. Water should already be directed away from the exterior of the foundation with gutters, downspouts, sloped soil, and



*What a completed closed crawlspace looks like.*

foundation drains. Closed crawl spaces additionally need a floor drain or sump pump so the crawl space doesn't turn into a swimming pool if there is condensation, wicking, a plumbing leak or other unexpected water event.

Water vapor is managed with a dehumidifier, and with supply air from the HVAC system, house air or an exhaust fan. Advanced Energy's research found that dehumidifiers and supply air are the most effective methods for controlling water vapor in a closed crawl space. If ductwork is already located in the crawl space, a supply duct is a terrific inexpensive option. And be aware of the long term electrical and maintenance costs to run a dehumidifier or exhaust fan.

For more information about crawl spaces, Advanced Energy has a handy research-based booklet for homeowners and contractors available at [crawlspace.org](http://crawlspace.org) or by calling (919) 857-9000.

As always when hiring a contractor, get at least three estimates, check references and have a detailed scope of work to make sure that you and the contractor are on the same page. Prices and descriptions may vary, but all estimates should include work that addresses the above four research-based categories. It's also reasonable to ask for before and after pictures. Go for it and trust your gut! 🏠

*Hannah McKenzie is a residential building science consultant for Advanced Energy in Raleigh.*



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## Clogged, Backed—up Septic System...Can anything Restore It?

**DEAR DARRYL:** My home is about 10 years old, and so is my septic system. I have always taken pride in keeping my home and property in top shape. In fact, my neighbors and I are always kidding each other about who keeps their home and yard nicest. Lately, however, I have had a horrible smell in my yard, and also in one of my bathrooms, coming from the shower drain. My grass is muddy and all the drains in my home are very slow.

My wife is on my back to make the bathroom stop smelling and as you can imagine, my neighbors are having a field day, kidding me about the mud pit and sewage stench in my yard. It's humiliating. I called a plumber buddy of mine, who recommended pumping (and maybe even replacing) my septic system. But at the potential cost of thousands of dollars, I hate to explore that option.

I tried the store bought, so called, Septic treatments out there, and they did Nothing to clear up my problem. Is there anything on the market I can pour or flush into my system that will restore it to normal, and keep it maintained?

*Clogged and Smelly – Asheville, NC*



Dear Darryl

**DEAR CLOGGED AND SMELLY:** As a reader of my column, I am sure you are aware that I have a great deal of experience in this particular field. You will be glad to know that there IS a septic solution that will solve your back-up and effectively restore your entire system from interior piping throughout the septic system and even unclog the drain field as well. **SeptiCleanse® Shock and Maintenance Programs** deliver your system the fast active bacteria and enzymes needed to liquefy solid waste and free the clogs causing your back-up.

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# Good books make good presents

With the Yuletide season upon us, 'tis the season for gift giving! Finding presents for gardeners is not really that hard—just give each of them a good book. Here are some good ones from regional authors that I read recently. And compared to shovels or rakes, they are much easier to wrap.

**“Deep-Rooted Wisdom” by Jenks Farmer** (Timber Press, 2014). Having been raised on a Beech Island, S.C., family farm that dates back to the 1700s, Jenks Farmer’s heritage influenced his thinking that, in gardening, newer is not always better. His 248-page book is a delightful retro guide to simpler yet successful ways to grow and enjoy plants.

**“Starter Vegetable Gardens” by Barbara Pleasant** (Storey Publishing, 2010). Floyd, Va., resident Barbara Pleasant has been writing about the virtues of organic gardening for 25 years. Her 180-page guide details 24 plans for new veggie gardens along with heaping helpings of her organic growing wisdom to create a fun reference for beginning growers.

**“Native Plants of the Southeast” by Larry Mellichamp** (Timber Press, 2014). A professor of botany at UNC-Charlotte since 1976, Larry Mellichamp knows plants. And he certainly knows plants in the woods of the Southeast. His impressive 367-page work covers 460 native plant species and helps us not only identify wild plants, but also details how each can be used in a cultivated garden.

**“Okra” by Virginia Willis** (UNC Press, 2014). One of the new additions to the UNC Press “Savor the South” series, this 107-page book begins with a generous appetizer of essential okra growing information, and then it shifts to the main course: an extensive collection of recipes from across the South as well as around the world.



gardenias and rhododendrons to help the plants retain their vital moisture. This will be especially beneficial to new plants that have been added to the garden this year.

- Now is not too early to have a soil test done. Some nutrients and conditioners take time becoming chemically incorporated into the soil, so the sooner you act, the better next spring’s garden will look.

## January

- Keep the colors of Christmas bright during the gray months of winter by properly watering such leftover indoor Yuletide plants as amaryllis, Christmas cactus, Christmas cherry and poinsettia only when the upper half-inch of soil in the pots is dry.
- Many outdoor flowering plants such as hellebores, winter daphne, wintersweet, sweetbox, winter honeysuckle and witch hazel will begin showing off at local nurseries this month, so if you forsake your friendly garden center until the spring, you could miss out on picking up some of these winter-blooming wonders.
- Why wait until spring to start your vegetable garden? This month into February is a good time to plant asparagus. Two recommended high-yielding varieties for Carolina gardens are ‘Jersey Knight’ and ‘Jersey Giant’.
- Salt stains from fertilizers taking the pretty away from your clay pots? Wash them with vinegar to restore their original look.
- Keep the bird feeder filled—your feathered friends will really appreciate it during these cold days! 🐦



### Timely Tip

African violets need to be watered, of course, but the chlorine typically found in city water can cause leaf spots and fewer flowers. An easy remedy is to simply leave a bottle of tap water out overnight to allow the chlorine to dissipate. As alternatives, you can also use rainwater or bottled distilled water. Both, by the way, are equally handy if you have hard (alkaline) tap water, which is also not good for African violets because it can raise the pH of the potted soil these acid-loving plants call home.

## Garden To Do’s

### December

- Turn over any vacated garden beds to expose overwintering insects and help loosen up the soil for next year’s garden.
- Drain the garden hose and store it for the winter.
- Cold-loving bulbous beauties such as crocus, hyacinths and tulips can still be planted this month.
- There can be dry spells in the winter. And if one does occur, consider spraying an anti-transpirant—Wilt-Pruf is one popular brand—on the foliage of evergreens such as azaleas, camellias, hollies,

L.A. Jackson is the former editor of Carolina Gardener Magazine. If you would like to ask him a question about your garden, contact L.A. at: [lajackson1@gmail.com](mailto:lajackson1@gmail.com).



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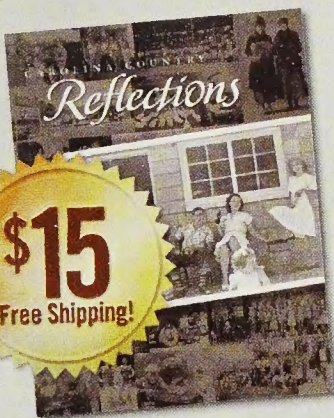
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### Old Fashioned Squash Casserole

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 10 cups sliced yellow squash (about 3 pounds) | 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided           |
| 1 ½ cups chopped sweet onion                  | 1 teaspoon salt                                  |
| 3 cups water                                  | ½ teaspoon ground black pepper                   |
| 3 cups chicken broth                          | ¼ teaspoon garlic powder                         |
| 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese, divided        | 1 large egg, lightly beaten                      |
| ½ cup sour cream                              | 1 ½ cups crushed buttery round crackers, divided |
| ½ cup mayonnaise                              |  |

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray a 2- to 2½-quart quart baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. Set aside.

In a Dutch oven, bring squash, onion, 3 cups water, and broth to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low; simmer until squash is crisp-tender, approximately 7 minutes. Drain well.

In a large bowl, gently stir together squash mixture, ½ cup cheese, sour cream, mayonnaise, butter, salt, pepper, garlic powder and egg. Spoon half of squash mixture into prepared dish, spreading evenly. Sprinkle with half of crushed crackers. Top with remaining squash mixture, remaining crushed crackers and remaining cheese.

Bake until cheese melts, approximately 25 minutes.

*Yield: approximately 10 servings.*

### Slow-Cooked Turkey Breast With Gravy

- 1 bone-in skin-on turkey breast (6–7 pounds)
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh thyme or 2 teaspoons dried thyme
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 1 cup chicken broth

#### Gravy:

- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 2 cups reserved turkey drippings
- Salt to taste
- Fresh thyme



*For turkey:* Using your fingers, gently loosen skin from turkey breast. In a small bowl, stir together thyme, onion powder, salt and pepper. Rub mixture under skin.

In a large skillet, heat canola oil over medium-high heat. Cook turkey until browned on both sides, approximately 2 minutes per side. Remove from heat.

Place turkey in a 6-quart slow cooker. Add broth to skillet, stirring to loosen browned bits. Add broth mixture to slow cooker. Cover and cook on low until tender, 5 to 6 hours.

Remove turkey from slow cooker. Cut into slices; place on a serving platter, cover with aluminum foil. Strain turkey drippings; reserve 2 cups.

*For gravy:* In a medium saucepan, add flour and pepper. Whisk in 2 cups reserved turkey drippings. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, whisking constantly. Reduce heat to medium-low; simmer until thickened, approximately 2 minutes. Add salt to taste. Serve gravy with turkey. Decorate platter with thyme, if desired.

*Yield: approximately 6 servings.*

### From Your Kitchen

- 3½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ cup sour cream
- ½ cup 2% milk
- ½ cup amaretto
- 1 cup butter, softened
- ½ cup shortening
- 3 cups sugar
- 6 eggs
- 2 teaspoons almond extract
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

#### Buttercream Frosting

- 1½ cups butter, softened
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 7½–8 cups confectioners' sugar
- ¼ cup amaretto

Optional decorations: toasted sliced almonds, milk chocolate M&M's, melted chocolate.

### Amaretto Cake With Buttercream Frosting

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Line bottoms of three greased 9-inch round baking pans with parchment paper; grease paper.

In a bowl, whisk flour and baking powder. In another bowl, whisk sour cream, milk and amaretto until blended. In a large bowl, cream butter, shortening and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in the extracts. Add flour mixture alternately with sour cream mixture, beating well after each addition.

Transfer batter to prepared pans. Bake 30–35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool in pans 10 minutes before removing to wire racks; remove paper. Cool completely.

In a large bowl, beat butter, vanilla and salt until creamy. Beat in enough confectioners' sugar, alternately with amaretto, to reach a desired consistency. Reserve ⅔ cup of frosting for the piping.

Place one cake layer on a serving plate; spread with ½ cup frosting. Top with remaining cake layers and frosting; frosting top and sides of cake.

Pipe reserved frosting around bottom edge of cake. If desired, decorate the cake with flowers, using almonds for the petals and M&M's for the centers. Pipe designs with melted chocolate as desired.

*This recipe comes from Megan Dudash of Youngsville, a member of Wake EMC.*

### Send Us Your Recipes

Contributors whose recipes are published will receive \$25. We retain reprint rights for all submissions. Recipes submitted are not necessarily entirely original. Include your name, address, phone number (for questions), and the name of your electric cooperative. Mail to: Carolina Country Kitchen, P.O. Box 27306, Raleigh, NC 27611 or E-mail to: [Jenny.Lloyd@carolinacountry.com](mailto:Jenny.Lloyd@carolinacountry.com).



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- Aches and pains
- Neuropathy
- Sciatica
- Inflammation

*The Jacuzzi® Hydrotherapy Shower provides a lifetime of comfort and relief... safely and affordably.*

As we age, the occasional aches and pains of everyday life become less and less occasional. Most of us are bothered by sore muscles, creaky joints and general fatigue as we go through the day- and it's made worse by everything from exertion and stress to arthritis and a number of other ailments. Sure, there are pills and creams that claim to provide comfort, but there is only one 100% natural way to feel better... hydrotherapy. Now, the world leader in hydrotherapy has invented the only shower that features Jacuzzi® Jets. It's called the Jacuzzi® Hydrotherapy Shower, and it can truly change your life.

For over 50 years, the Jacuzzi® Design Engineers have worked to bring the powerful benefits of soothing hydrotherapy into millions of homes. Now, they've created a system that can fit in the space of your existing bathtub or shower and give you a lifetime of enjoyment, comfort and pain-relief. They've thought of everything. From the high-gloss acrylic surface, slip-resistant flooring, a hand-held shower wand to a comfortable and adjustable seat, to strategically-placed grab bars and lots of storage, this shower has it all.

Why wait to experience the Jacuzzi® Hydrotherapy Shower? Call now... it's

the first step in getting relief from those aches and pains.



**Call toll free now and find out how you can receive your FREE special report**

Mention promotional code 59389

**1-844-823-8456**





# dish

Promotional Prices Start As Low As:

# \$19<sup>99</sup>/mo

for 12 months



## WE MAKE IT EASY. YOU CHOOSE

the plan that works best for you and your family!

# NO

Term Contracts!  
Credit Checks!  
Commitments!

## FLEX TV™

Everyday Packages Prices Start As Low As: **\$32<sup>99</sup>/mo**

# TV SIMPLY COSTS LESS!

More Channels. More Choices.



**FREE OFFERS!**

**FREE HOPPER®**  
**WHOLE-HOME HD DVR UPGRADE**

- Record up to 6 Shows at once.
- Store up to 2,000 Hours.
- State-of-the-Art User Interface.
- Remote Control Locator.

**FREE PREMIUM CHANNELS** for 3 Months!

**HBO CINEMAX starz**

Offer subject to change based on premium channel availability.  
Features must be enabled by customer. Available with qualifying packages. Monthly fees apply: Hopper, \$12; Joey, \$7; Super Joey, \$10.

Look At These Great Offers!

enjoy **HIGH-SPEED INTERNET**  
No Matter Where You Live!  
No TV Service Required!

starting at **\$19<sup>99</sup>/mo**

**Smart Pack** Not eligible for Hopper.  
Over 55 Favorite Channels - Everyday Price \$32.99/mo.

Save \$13/mo for 12 months

Animal Planet	C-SPAN2	FYI	HSN	Science
Bloomberg Television	Dish-HOME Interactive TV	Great American Country	Nickelodeon/Nick at Nite E/W	The Hub Network
Boomerang	DIY	Hallmark Channel	Nicktoons Network	TV Guide Network
Cooking Channel	Food Network	Hallmark Movie Channel	Outdoor Channel	TV Land
C-SPAN	FOX News Channel	HLN	QVC	Weather Channel

**\$19<sup>99</sup>/mo**  
FOR 12 MONTHS

plus many more!

**America's Top 120**  
Over 190 Favorite Channels - Everyday Price \$34.99/mo.

Save \$25/mo for 12 months

ASX	CNN	ESPN2	IFC	Syfy	VH1
ABC Family	Comedy Central	Food Network	Lifetime	TBS	WE tv
AMC	Discovery Channel	FOX News Channel	msnbc	TLC	Weather Channel
AXS TV	DishCD - Over 30 Music Channels	Fuse	MTV	Travel Channel	
Cartoon Network E	Disney Channel E	FX	Nickelodeon/Nick at Nite E	TV Land	
Cartoon Network W	Disney Channel W	HGTV	Nickelodeon/Nick at Nite W	USA	
CMT	E! Entertainment Television	History	pivot	Velocity - HD only	
CNBC	ESPN	HLN	Spike TV		

**\$29<sup>99</sup>/mo**  
FOR 12 MONTHS

plus many more!

**America's Top 200**  
Over 240 Favorite Channels - Everyday Price \$69.99/mo.

Save \$30/mo for 12 months

Includes all America's Top 120 channels plus channels listed below.

Animal Planet	Esquire Network	Hallmark Channel	NFL Network	Regional Sports Networks 1	Turner Classic Movies
ABC America	Fox Business Network	Investigation Discovery	NHL Network	RFD-TV	Unimas
BET	FOX Sports 1	Lifetime Movie Network	Nick Jr.	Science	Univision E
Big Ten Network 1	FX	MLB Network	Ovation	Sundance TV	Univision W
Bravo	Galavision	National Geographic Channel	OWN Oprah Winfrey Network	TeenNick	Univision Deportes Network
Disney Junior	Golf Channel	NBA TV	Oxygen	The Hub Network	UP
Disney XD	GSN	NBC Sports Network	Pac 12 Networks 2	TruTV	WGN America

**\$39<sup>99</sup>/mo**  
FOR 12 MONTHS

**America's Top 250**  
Over 290 Favorite Channels - Everyday Price \$79.99/mo.

Save \$35/mo for 12 months

Includes all America's Top 200 channels plus channels listed below.

American Heroes Channel	Destination America	Encore Classic	FXM	Nicktoons Network	VH1 Classic
beIN SPORTS	DISH Music - Over 16 Music Channels	Encore Family	Great American Country	Outdoor Channel	Z Living
Bloomberg Television	DIY	Encore Suspense	Hallmark Movie Channel	Rural TV	
Boomerang	Encore W	Encore Westerns	MoviePlex	Sportsman Channel	
Chiller	Encore Action	EPIC DRIVE-IN	mun2	Tennis Channel	
Cooking Channel	Encore Black	FOX Sports 2	Nat Geo WILD	The Movie Channel W	

**\$44<sup>99</sup>/mo**  
FOR 12 MONTHS

plus many more!

All offers require 24-month commitment and credit qualification. Monthly fees apply based on number of rooms.

1=Available in: Ohio, Michigan, Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, Nebraska and sections of Pennsylvania and Indiana. 2=Available in: sections of California, Oregon, Utah, Colorado, Arizona and Washington. 3= Regional Sports Networks are available based on your geographical location.

# 1-866-549-5434

Mon-Fri 9am-7pm EST, Sat-Sun 10pm-4pm EST, Sun 9am-8pm CST

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**dish**  
AUTHORIZED RETAILER

**FlexTV Offer Important Terms and Conditions:** Activation fee: FlexTV plan requires \$199 activation fee and receiver purchase. Customers subscribing to DishLATINO or qualifying International or Latin America packages receive instant \$150 credit on activation fee. Installation/Equipment Requirements: Monthly fees and limits on number and type of receivers will apply. All charges, including monthly programming pay-per-view and equipment upgrades, must be paid in advance; failure to pay by due date will lead to service disconnection within 24 hours. **Important Terms and Conditions:** Promotional Offers (not eligible for FlexTV Offer): Requires activation of new qualifying DISH service. All prices, fees, charges, packages, programming, features, functionality and offers subject to change without notice. **ETP:** If you cancel service during first 24 months, early termination fee of \$20 for each month remaining applies. Activation fee may apply. **Activation Requirements:** Hopper: Monthly fees: DVR service, \$12; Joey, \$7; Super Joey, \$10. Requires Super Joey to record 8 shows at once. Recording hours vary, 2000 hours based on HD. All streaming equipment comparison based on equipment available from major TV providers as of 6/13/14. Premium Channels: premium offer value is \$135; after 3 months then standard monthly rates apply and are subject to change. Blockbuster @Home requires Internet to stream content. HD-only channels not available with select packages. Installation/Equipment Requirements: Leased equipment must be returned to DISH upon cancellation or unreturned equipment fees apply. Upfront and additional monthly fees may apply. Free 5-day trial period for installation only. **Miscellaneous:** Offers available for new and qualified former customers, and subject to terms of applicable Promotional and Residential Customer Agreements. Service surcharge charges may apply. Additional restrictions and taxes may apply. **Offers end 1/16/15.** HBO®, Cinemax® and related channels and service marks are the property of Home Box Office, Inc. STARZ and related channels and service marks are property of Starz Entertainment, LLC. Internet Regular monthly rate and Promotional Rate for High-Speed Internet Product varies by providers available at each individual address. \$19.99 rate is most widely available product. Call for providers available.